

SEX AGE

50¢

#37

# heartattack



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#3, #4, #11, & #16-#28 the usual shit  
#29 2001 a (empty) space odyssey  
#30 Bury Me Standing and Le Shok  
#31 Police Line & Council Records  
#32 Blast! interview  
#33 Unholy Grave interview  
#34 Tear It Up and Against Me!

All other issues sold out.

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**CONTRIBUTIONS:** We need articles, interviews, letters, and just about anything you can think of. Most of the things in *HaC* were just sent in by random people. You can do the same. We print what we like. Throw in some stamps if you want your shit back.

**COMPUTER INFO:** *HeartattaCk* is fully computerized... so if you can, please send all contributions on disk. You can use IBM or Macintosh disks, but please save all files as text only files!!! You can also submit via e-mail, but again please save all files as text only. If you don't have access to a computer or typewriter then use a pencil or pen.

# Issue #37

The Learning, The Learned, and All The Space In Between:

The next issue of HaC will have a theme issue focusing on EDUCATION. We are currently accepting submissions of all kinds on this theme. Punks who are teachers, punks in the education system, thoughts on new ways to educate and learn, and much more will hopefully be covered. Please send us your articles, interviews, columns, and art. The deadline for this issue is APRIL 1ST 2003.

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*I did this interview in summer '02 starting it as an Olli-only-interview, but later it turned out that it was going to be a Yage interview and that's why pretty much everyone of the band dropped in and made points and comments along the interview. It is still very Olli-centered, but I think that it reflects very well the plurality within the band. I hope you enjoy the interview and draw something positive out of it. For a German version please try ><http://www.mywar.cjb.net><; there are hints how to get My War #03 where the interview will be published in German. Thanx to yage\_ (CONTR@).*

**Complete name:** Krebs, Oliver

**Birth date:** 22.05.1973

**Residence:** Cologne

**Job/profession:** Trying to live my hobbies and get enough money for life by some different jobs.

**5 actual favorite bands:** Off Minor, Owls, Eek-a-mouse, Amanda Woodward, Orchid.

**5 all time favorite bands:** Portraits of Past, The Who, Cap'n Jazz, Honeywell, Evergreen.

**Actual activities in punk:** hmmm - What is doing things in the punk genre? Playing in a band? Doing a label? Organizing shows, trying to do benefits? Look on what I consume? Maybe it is?

**Former activities in punk:** same as above

**Worst record I own:** record w/ dirty jokes

**Best record I own:** Too many.

**Yage Discography:** s/t 7" (Feb.1999), October LP (Feb.2000), split 7" with Engrave (Aug.2000), split 7" with Robocop Kraus (apr.2001), Human Head 10" (June 2001), s/t 7" (Feb.2002) and various comp tracks.

**I'm reading at the moment:** "Reading class" books, because I have exams soon.

**Favourite Book:** One Flew Over the Cuckoos Nest (Ken Kesey) nearly everything by T.C.Boyle

**Favourite Movie:** Quadrophenia, One Flew Over the Cuckoos Nest.

**HaC:** Please introduce yourself and the band a little and try to explain to what the members are dedicating their time besides the band—studies, jobs, etc. Maybe you can give as a short overview of your band history?

**Olli:** Yage is existing thanks to Daniel, Nikita, Marc, Stephan and Oliver. We rehearsed for the first time in May '98, without Stephan who joined the band at the end of this year. It was pure accident that we got to know each other and even more, considering the fact that we harmonized so well musically and that we got along so perfect on a personal level. In the meantime we have developed a strong friendship and Yage is a very important part of our all lives.

Stephan takes his final exams in geography tomorrow (the interview was done in May '02). Daniel works as a male nurse and will start studying medicine sometime soon. Marc studies education and works in a social facility with psychically handicapped persons. Nikita is spending a lot of time working for his label, Nova Recordings, and he is doing the European distribution for some other record labels. Besides that he is sporadically working. I'm finishing at the moment some sort of continuation of my education; a graphic school and after that I plan to concentrate more on the work for my label, EarthWaterSky-Connection. But before that I want to travel a lot, see different places of the

world and get to know other cultures because there is no hurry about starting a "9-to-5-living-for-my-job"-life.

**HaC:** Could you theoretically imagine making a living out of the band or the label? On what conditions would you do it and what compromises would you make?

**Olli:** We have discussed this already detailed Daniel, do you remember? Well, we have different opinions on that subject in the band. I, personally, could imagine this becoming reality under certain circumstances. In any case it would have to be ensured that that we had a lot of freedom and that we were able to do exactly what we do now! As well in a musical as in a ideological way; this doesn't mean that you have to prostitute yourself completely for the music industry. To me it would be definitely essential that I/we could decide as much as possible. In the case that you can live from the band it would leave you enough time to organize things yourself. Of course you would have to make a lot of compromises, but I think that you can use even the most negative aspects of such a scenario to create something positive; for example playing in front of an advertisement could be used to explain explicitly your point of view for the audience or the background of the ad. Regarding the label I can't imagine something better than living from that. But again I have to make clear what has absolute priority: my ideals, the meaning and the reasons for me to do this—they would have to be maintained. All I have said regarding this subject is pure theory and only my personal point of view.

**Stephan:** Like Olli said already, this question has been a matter of hard discussions within the band quite a few times. The reason for that obviously is that we have different opinions on the subject. I couldn't imagine to make a living off the band because I think that we would have to make too many compromises in order to reach that goal. Certain compromises I simply couldn't justify for myself, like playing big festivals or doing interviews for newspapers and magazines that I wouldn't even read. I wouldn't want to see our band and our music on a level like that because it simply means too much to me.

**Daniel:** It's really not depending on the job you have because you always have to make compromises. Creating music can as well be a job as constructing a house, teaching children and laying tiles. The special thing about Yage for me always was/is that there aren't any obligations, that we do everything related with the band the way we want to. If it turns into your priority, in your job everything changes. Many people will respond now with the Fugazi example, but has anybody really talked to Fugazi to know how they do it? I personally think that it's an illusion to think that you can be a professional musician without having to compromise a lot. I personally don't really want to do it. I also have lost the feeling that one can change things by playing music. I am not so sure about that anymore. To me it's more important now to give my life a sense that is something more than: "I'm fine, I got the best for me."

**HaC:** Why have bands trying exactly the same failed so catastrophically in the past? If you take a closer look you will soon find out that there is no band on a comparable level that isn't

ridiculous... recent examples are The International Noise Conspiracy and Rage Against the Machine...

**Olli:** I'm not quite sure in how far Rage Against the Machine are ridiculous, but I know that they have supported some good things and without the money from the music industry they would've never been able to do that. That is always depending from your point of view.... I do think that there are stages between DIY-HC and top 40 bands. I think it is very strange that people automatically associate a bigger bands with MTV and sell out. There are definitely stages in between.

**Marc:** I think that the problem is different from the; in my opinion, often dogmatic discussion about sell out and DIY. People talk too much about ideals, contents and substance without making clear what they exactly mean. In the context of my tiny hardcore-punk-definition this means a radical critic of the ideology of the existing and the attempt to overcome capitalistic structures. Starting from that as a base I could imagine different strategies to live from a band/label. For example like in the case of Rage Against the Machine, who have adapted



themselves more to the existing structures than most hc/punk bands in order to propagate their ideals and contents in an explicit manner and in the end to support radical left wing politics ideologically and financially. I wouldn't dismiss The (International) Noise Conspiracy as ridiculous as you do it, although if they are collaborating even more with the music industry. You can't accuse them of not putting their political beliefs when and wherever possible in the center. If that always works out or in how far you can consider this project as a success would have to be discussed in detail in another place; I have to confess that I'm not following their actions consciously.

But the question remains; what strategies has the subculture punk/HC to offer that could be used against the capitalistic value system, as means of criticism of the ruling class or as possibility to do the right in a wrong world? I do not think that punk/HC is per se anti-capitalistic, criticizing dominating ideologies or



emancipating. Capitalism is total and global, so that punk/HC also has to arrange itself with these structures and has to search for possibilities to resist again and again. What exactly these possibilities are has to be observed permanently and questioned self critically. Currently I have the impression that the majority of the punks out there relax, thinking that they are doing it better any ways then all the rest. I don't want to exclude myself from that theory as I see it as something very difficult to do the right in the so-called omnipresent wrong.

**Stephan:** Frankly speaking I totally think the contrary. I don't think that there is a middle way that combines the two aspects. All that bands that you were mentioning are some of the best examples... be it INC or At The Drive In, I think that a lot of what they do is so artificial. I don't like people putting on the political mask trying to tell you what has to be changed and stuff. I find it pretty ridiculous that they are playing concerts and festivals with multinational corporations sponsoring the whole event and they are preaching exactly against these coops. Of course they have done some good things too, mainly because they have such a big crowd, but I think there were too many negative aspects that I find impossible to tolerate for me personally. If these people want to earn money with playing music than I'm totally fine with that and I wish them all the luck there is. But to me this sort of marketing/selling a band is intolerable and I'd never do it and I don't think that it's worth our support. There are a lot of other bands far more interesting that are worth our support.

**HaC:** "...I have to make clear what has absolute priority: my ideals, the meaning and the reasons for me to do this—they would have to be maintained!" Well, Olli, please tell us to what exactly you are referring with these words...

**Olli:** The main reason for doing this label is definitely to release good music which in perfect cases transports a good message in its lyrics. This is the ideal. Furthermore I hope to do a favor to nice people. It's some sort of self realization because music means so much to me. Another goal I try to achieve is to keep the prices low and keep the vinyl alive. I simply don't like the commercial motivation that CDs bring and in a lot of cases it's exactly the same with expensive vinyl records that have lost all relation with its production costs.

**HaC:** How is the band going at the moment and what plans do you have for the future? I've heard rumors of a record on Ebullition...

**Olli:** Actually, the band works pretty well although we notice that the normal things in life like work or exams don't leave us that much time to work on the band like it was the case when we started. Like we have always done, we are trying to give everything possible to keep the band going. This is also a question of your priorities; if your studies are more important or you prefer the regular life... with 5 individuals in the band that is, of course, always different. Our plans are to continue with the band as long as possible and to play as many concerts as possible. We just bought our tickets for our tour in the States in August and September and we are working on new songs to record a new full length, but this will take some more time.

It's true that we talked to Kent about

releasing a record on Ebullition but we got already some questions about it and decided not to talk about it as it will take some more months to get all the songs to start recording. I think we will have enough time and opportunities in the future to talk about the stuff we do in the future.

**Stephan:** Olli is right on that one, we all have to get a lot of other stuff done besides Yage and also have to concentrate on other aspects in our lives. That is a pretty weird thing because we all want to spend more time together, we want to tour more and stuff, but we can't. I'm close to finishing my studies and logically I'm in a pretty intense phase of my university life with a lot of exams, a lot of pressure.

But I—or better, we all—think subconsciously already in the next tour, the next travelling experience with our band, knowing that we will have a great time doing that. I couldn't imagine my life without this band at the moment and I'm so grateful and happy for/about all the support and energy that I receive from the people.

**HaC:** Who booked your shows in the States and what expectations do you have concerning this tour?

**Olli:** Our tour was booked by Steve Roche from Off Minor with whom we will tour partially. Personally I don't have that many expectations as I know that it is a lot harder to tour over there then to do it here. I think that we are pretty lucky with the way that tours work in Europe and that is surely also a reason why so many bands from the states come to Europe to tour. It will surely be a very exiting time that will cost us a lot of energy and motivation but in the end it will hopefully be a positive experience for all of us.

**HaC:** What do you think in general of the relation between the American and the European punk/HC communities? Don't you think that there is a certain subculture imperialism taking place with an dominant presence of the USA?

**Olli:** I'm not so sure about that. Some years back I also felt like that, but I think that lately it has changed for the better because you notice that people in the States are more and more interested in European bands. A very important factor with positive consequences is obviously the Internet

because you can act more globally now. For example the label work is a lot easier because I can contact people from all over the world in a very uncomplicated way and sometimes you even make friends like that. I see this as a very positive effect.

**Marc:** The concept of imperialism is pretty disputed at the moment and I don't like the way that it is used in the European punk/HC community. On a political level very complex mechanisms and processes are reduced to plans for building a pipeline by attributing the word imperialism. Where are people building a pipeline in the punk/HC community? Or is it more a question of keeping the European scene clean and aware of the evil and uncultivated American influences? Seriously; what exactly is the us-imperialism in the European punk/HC scene? Isn't it us in Europe who are permanently observing/importing the newest bands, the latest trends or whatever?! And aren't we exactly the people who prefer seeing a US-band than a band from our town or even a band from Eastern Europe? Isn't it the bookers in Europe who prefer booking a band from the states than organizing a tour for a local band? Nobody is forcing us to pay more attention to US-bands than to our own bands or other bands, we are the people taking the decision. There isn't a CIA conspiracy with the nice folks from the Pentagon. In general I find it very positive that there exist structures that make the global exchange possible. I can only agree with what Olli said. And if there are shitty bands playing that I don't want to support, be it from the States or from Europe or from wherever, I simply don't go to their shows—and if it's necessary you can disturb these shows.

**Stephan:** I don't see that aspect of imperialism you are pointing out. Sure, there is always an incredible amount of bands touring here and often it's the same bands. That is what really bothers me. I simply don't feel like watching a band 5 or 6 times especially not when their concerts aren't something really extraordinary. But there are a lot of different opinions and thoughts on the subject, I guess. In general I find it pretty cool that there is the possibility for a lot of bands to





tour Europe without any trouble/problems. Surely, it's a shame that there are a lot more people in the crowd when a band from the States plays as when a band from Spain or Germany plays. But this is a decision the crowd makes and it has definitely changed in the last years for the better.

**HaC:** Well, you guys are touring over there now and you are releasing records on US-labels, but how many European bands are doing that at the moment? How many European bands have toured the States already?

**Olli:** There are quite some bands that have done that before and are doing it right now (records and touring!). I think that there is a process; a process of European bands being accepted, recognized and appreciated more and more in the States.

**Stephan:** We will see how the people react.

**HaC:** Some days ago I saw Engine Down playing a show here, in Valencia, and I thought in the difficulties concerning the release of their record on your label... what is the relation like now? Would you do something similar again? After all, was it worth all the hassle when you think of the relation that you got with them now on a person to person level?

**Olli:** I can't say much more than that they are nice guys because there isn't really a contact between us. I will see them again this week on tour and that will be fun, I guess... well, to be quite honest I still like the idea of having a certain relationship with the band on a personal level, which doesn't mean that I'm disappointed anymore when this relationship doesn't exist anymore, like back then. And yes, I think it was worth all the hassle because I think it is fantastic to release music that has given you a lot and still means a lot to you.

**HaC:** Seems like you are doing Yage for something more than just fun and to kill boredom; what's your motivation, what do you want to point out? Is there a political aspect in the Yage activities?

**Olli:** I think that making music is a big compensation for all of us! There are a lot of things that we point out, a lot of things that get expressed... may it be happiness, hate, love, yearning, utopia or other things. Each of us is putting a lot of energy and emotions in Yage. There is a political aspect for sure and I would even say that we have sort of found a common level where everybody still has it's individual beliefs, thoughts and opinions about certain subjects. This is a very important moment in Yage because like that we can discuss a lot of things within the band and we get to know each other even more and grow as individuals and as a collective.

**HaC:** When I got this right you guys share some common ground/direction in a political sense without having a definite place within politics... Do you vote? I wasn't the last time and—boom—we got that CDU-shitheads governing in my state... well, on the other hand it's important to have polarization within society to make people move their asses...

**Olli:** I would answer the first question more or less like you did and I think it's pretty much the same for the others in Yage. I can only speak for myself and I couldn't categorize my political position, can't find a name for it to make it clearer like communism or something... I'm for equal

rights on this planet and that is the foundation for my lifestyle and my political beliefs to sum it up in one sentence. I'm travelling this time when the elections take place so I won't be able to vote. In general I try to vote for the lesser political evil. I'm all the way with your last sentence; just look at what happened in France.

**Stephan:** I have a different opinion on that one. I will definitely vote this year but I won't use my voice to support any of the already existing opinions/parties. I will rather try, like in the last years too, to show that there isn't any party that I want to vote for, that represents my ideas and my beliefs. I would like to see more people doing the same; showing their refusal to support any party; not participating means absolutely nothing—you have to participate and make your voice uncountable for any of the parties; like crossing out the whole document or writing a sentence on it; anything. I think it would be pretty effective when a lot of people did that; using their ballot-papers in a more creatively criticizing way then just putting a cross on it.

In France the problem wasn't the people who didn't vote, the media likes to use that point to explain that people not voting support the right wing with their apathy...

Maybe I'm still dreaming of: "imagine there are elections and nobody participates."

**HaC:** I don't want to bother you with the subject, but it's like a pretty common phenomenon within punk rock—everybody has some things that are important for them but real and honest interest in political themes and activities is hard to find. Most people lack a clear and definite position in left wing politics, maybe it isn't even from interest for them. Does that bother you or do you find it totally normal?

**Olli:** I'm not quite sure if I understand you correctly, but anyway... I'm not even sure if it is that important to have a clear and definite political position... like I said already in my case it isn't like that and I find it totally okay as long as I know what I want and where I stand. For me it's pretty sad to see that the political and/or a critical aspect is often pushed aside by a lot of people and bands within punk, some don't even think of the possibility. I'd like to see people focusing more on that sort of things again, because it's clear that with more like-minded people you can achieve a lot more.

**Marc:** Daniel, I gotta tell you that I totally agree with you. I think that there is a tradition of having a few positive ideas with a certain subversive potential within the punk-hc-community, but most of it is copied and adopted without reflecting and thinking about it in depth. In general this isn't really a problem because it gives some people the possibility to have a glimpse at another point of view. Definitely we are lacking a vital exchange of ideas of how society can be positively changed. Punk/hc has indeed for the most people, and I'm consciously including myself here, an identifying function. It's often more important to wear the right patch than to educate yourself on a subject and to get active. I have to say that I regret that a little because I still have a little bit of hope that a change for the positive in our world is possible (if not, so it will be a slow and rotting change for the bad). On the other hand I know a lot of people among my friends that started with punk/hc and had exactly this sort of punk socialization and later

moved on to other things and today these people are a basic part of activist groups, demonstrations, organizations, housing projects and more... like I said, I still have some hope left.

**HaC:** Well, there are these 16 year old straight edge kids that label themselves communists every now and then but I miss something that can be taken seriously—as an alternative and therefore as a threat to the existing system. Shouldn't punk try to work on that point, to get more concrete there, to find alternatives with clear answers or is it enough when everybody reads some Crimethinc books once in a while?

**Olli:** That's pretty much our own fault, but you would have to be a majority to be a threat to the system. I think it would be a very long process to endanger the capitalistic system through massive boycotts, strikes and activist groups that concentrate more on a certain issue in order to make that tree fall down in the long run.

**Marc:** Another point that I agree with you, Daniel. Subculture and the culture of the masses aren't enemies anymore—it's totally the contrary. Especially in the music business you can perfectly see how these extremes are completing each other. The culture industry needs the subculture to satisfy the permanent urge of the masses to hear/live something new. Often the various subcultures offer exactly and without wasting another thought about it what the industry is looking for. In this post-modern age of "anything goes" with Che Guevara as a commercial sales guarantee, words like "revolution" as commercial slogan you have to ask yourself seriously how you can act radically against existing situations. We spoke about it already at the beginning of the interview—they are not selling Rage Against The Machine IN SPITE OF their subversive propaganda but BECAUSE OF IT that propaganda. They have authenticity and that certain masculine rock rebel image that originals like the Rolling Stones can only imitate nowadays. I don't want to criticize Rage Against The Machine because I do like their ideas—but what is very interesting is the fact that today you can sell bands that have all the time been very outspoken against the marketing structures and strategies. The question to answer for us would be the one of the alternatives that we could come up with in order to create a bigger audience than the one that we have already in our punk-hc-community.

**Daniel:** Well, pretty much depends on what you understand as a threat to the actual system. I have the impression that it is not existing. I mean there might be a lot of alternatives, but which one do you want it to be? Just let's pick the example of the anti-globalization movement: there are a lot of people on these impressive demonstrations in Seattle and Genoa and they speak about revolution and resistance... but also there are so many different opinions of what an alternative has to look like.

One thing has to be made clear: you can't threaten the system because it has the monopoly of violence/power. Where should there be a bigger force. The system that we live in is based on the society we have and everything against that concept would be civil war. I strongly believe that a successful alternative would have to developed with a lot of time. About 2000 years ago you couldn't dream of human rights (which naturally aren't respected always and



everywhere), so why shouldn't be there the possibility of an anarchist country in a century? Maybe there will even be a world without borders, a world that we can't imagine today.

But answering our question: it would be great when punk could become an alternative to our society system but it couldn't be a real threat. The influence of punk on society is way too small for that. I would see the alternative in a community without authority and with a antipatriarchal conscience. Unfortunately we have to realize way too often that punk only is a part of society that is separating itself through fashion. The influence of society on punk is a lot bigger than the other way around. What I mean is that punk must become the alternative and not just show a few points—utopias have to be lived in punk.

**HaC:** How do you see the DIY-Punk-HC at the moment? I mean, we both know how it was back in the days; has it changed a lot—positively or negatively? What bothers you?

**Olli:** Well, that a difficult one that I'm not quite sure how to answer, actually I don't feel competent enough to answer this one. I have to say that I adore the way independent housing

fine with people calling us an emo band, but that is a hard discussed topic within the band as well. **Stephan:** I don't have any problem with people calling us an emo band because for me it has a different meaning from the one that most people have these days. With the emo thing a lot of things changed in my life and I wished people in the genre would still be playing the stuff they did 10 years ago. But it isn't that important at all... I like the word emopunk.

**HaC:** Who is the college rocker in your band?

**Ollie:** No, you got that wrong. I meant, that for example Daniel has a different definition of the word emo and for him it's hard to identify himself with the concept because it isn't anymore like it was back then. So, no—no college rock in da house!

**Stephan:** No, you won't find any college rock here but we do have some college-university kids in the band!

**HaC:** Can you give me example of especially positive or negative experiences with Yage?

**Ollie:** Hmm, I really have to think to find negative experiences. I mean, obviously it wasn't that cool that they ripped us off when we bought our first van... also the whole touring wasn't very optimal

feeling!"

**Ollie:** I would be interested in knowing why you feel that way. Age is a pretty wide subject; I simply feel that it means really a lot to me and how it keeps me alive and therefore I don't have a clue about when I will stop living that way. I'm trying to live a happy life, which means to me to live the things that make life for me beautiful as intense as possible. I don't see the necessity in settling down one day to live a life more organized, more adapted to accepted standards. I want to live the way I feel and not be forced by ideas and values that are dictated by society. Surely, I have to make compromises but I try to be as free as I can be. Maybe I will feel like settling down one day and that is pretty much okay also, when I fell like doing it, but as for now I don't want to limit myself. That is not the sense of life as I see it. Maybe it should rather be: "You are so young or old like you are."

**Stephan:** A very inspiring and old skater said: "The older I get the more I notice that age doesn't matter." Some weeks ago I was pretty impressed by that sentence because sometimes I really do feel too old for some things. But on the other hand I don't and therefore I won't set myself any limits, won't say then and then I will stop doing this and that—although my parents would like to hear those words coming out of my mouth.

**HaC:** To answer your question really quickly; I have always seen the hc-punk-thing like something juvenile, something that always bears new generations of kids and I think that you notice that especially on the contents level of things. There aren't that many people, bands or institutions in hc-punk that express what they say intelligently—better said: that transport ideas and thoughts that are well thought, well structured, there's a lack of maturity in that. Sometimes I feel honestly annoyed by some people talking so much bullshit in hc-punk, and hell, we wanted to start a revolution, jaja! There is a lack of substance also, surely you got a good feeling, all your buddies are there and I personally couldn't live without it, but what is all behind it, why do we do it—what do we do it for? What shall be reached? A shitload of bands and records that no one needs—a good feeling—that's not enough for me, I can't see any development. Personally I could justify doing things that lack substance with 18, with 20 and maybe with 24 but I'm so tired of it now. Maybe I'm too ambitious or demanding too much but I definitely miss something. What we basically have is a subculture that is in the continuing process of rejuvenating itself with a certain age that never changes—a subculture that doesn't develop, that doesn't think further that is something static with always the same topics/contents that get more and more irrelevant to me. Maybe my way of seeing things is easier to explain with an example: imagine some guy who gets older, learns, experiences life and in the end is maybe changing something for the positive—hc/punk is the same guy, having always the same age and the guy is experiencing nothing, is not developing, is not learning and in the end is not changing anything. It boils down to the word STATIC and new people repeating old mistakes.

**Olli:** But this, my dear friend, is the method of the easiest way, isn't it. Throw it all out the window and that's about it. I see things pretty similar, but I think that if you have the feeling



projects or organizations are still working and all the projects they make possible. Furthermore I have a lot of respect for the people who continue doing it the DIY way because back then it was in a lot of cases the money of their parents that made their projects possible. On the other hand I find myself in the situation where DIY is connected with earning money in order to survive, but is that still DIY? It's pretty difficult for me to differentiate, to separate these two ways of working.

**HaC:** A lot of people consider you guys an emo band; what does that expression mean to you? Are you okay with people calling you an emo band?

**Olli:** Yes, we are definitely emo, but who isn't? It's a concept within the hardcore subculture that has changed its meaning a lot in the last years. When I speak of emo hardcore I'm referring to my personal definition of the concept, which has nothing to do with college rock and therefore I'm

in the beginning. For example we did a tour some time ago and one night before we were going to leave for tour we got a call that we got some dates fixed in Sweden... it was all very hard, very exhausting but we always tried to get the best out of the situation and it's a positive experience to overcome a bad situation. What I like most about it all is to realize that it actually means a lot to some people what we do. That is a very awesome feeling and gives me so much energy to continue. Also we got to know a lot of nice people in that short amount of time in so different places—we have made friends everywhere and that is simply something that lets you feel good.

**HaC:** You are 29 now; how long do you see yourself doing all that? Personally I feel that my time has come already with 25, I swore myself that I won't start a new band after 26... in how far does age matter to you? And please don't answer crap like, "You are as young as you are



that it's stagnating and not really productive it should be your goal to work on that, to make people move and be an influence for them.

Well, to a certain extent it was something juvenile for me also all the time, because I was a teenager back then when I started identifying myself with punk and now I look back and see that I'm not that young anymore—but hey, so what?! What do you want me to do now? Turn around, getting into something serious and real?! Leaving puberty and all silly and crazy ideas behind in order to get a real life with a job and some security for my future?! Starting to eat animals again because it was all crazy puberty ideas?! No thanks, that is not for me. I don't know what future holds for me but I know that all this is not a puberty phase for me like for so many others.

I'm very happy to see that with my involvement in Yage I got a more criticizing human being again—to see so many people out there that make things happen and that could be really interesting partners for future projects. You talked about revolution... do you want it? If you do so then withdrawing isn't the correct option I think. Personally I have some problems with the word revolution. It's a question of definition, I think—but to me it always sounds like you could change the world in just one night. Everybody with some sort of common sense has to agree with me, that we are absolutely powerless and helpless when there are big things to be hanged in a short time. Therefore I see my revolution in the attempt to escape the system, that is to say, that I try to profit from the positive sides and fight/escape the negative ones.

Of course there are a lot of small actions and activities that make us move forward, but we have to keep in mind that we are facing an awfully powerful machine. To overcome that one we would have to count with the support of the majority of society and that is something that I can't see at all at the moment. The first step for me is to live my life consciously, to stick together so that we can build independent structures that may not be valid/useful for everybody but for the ones that think the same as we do and maybe we could hurt the monster with that a little. That whole thing would have to grow and become an interesting alternative for a lot of people. I'm not limiting this idea by thinking only of punk/hardcore people. That is one of the most limiting thoughts... there are so many people that are politically active and live and act critically that have never heard of punk. Also it would have to be something with a global character; people coming together from wherever with that one goal: a peaceful existence with equal rights for everyone. That's the way I see it and I'm sorry if it comes over as some sort of "Mr.-know-it-all-crap."

**HaC:** Nice, nice, nice—I simply see that idea of escaping the system as some elitist bullshit. We have the possibility to do it because we don't have any serious obligations, because we don't live the life with work, kids and we have way too much time. With that sort of concept we are excluding 98% of humanity; the normal worker doesn't have this possibility and that are the people that really get fucked and that are conscious about it. That's why I see revolution as the only act to make an effective change because everything else is

making you personally more content but doesn't change the problem. It's like taking aspirin; you don't cure your headache, just make it go away for some hours. Of course you have to build your little world to retire and get new energy, but there is the problem: punk always is transmitting the idea of a political and revolutionary movement that in reality is nothing but a joke. And there I see the contradiction, the waste of time and energy that I'm not willing anymore to participate in. I don't want to grow up or grow out of punk—all that I want is to use the time and the energy I have effectively for the right goals. Punk, as it represents itself today, is in that sense a complete waste for me. But hey, don't be afraid it is something I have in my backbone...

**HaC:** When will you be touring Spain again?

**Ollie:** Would be cool to be able to say: soon—but it doesn't look like that at all. We spoke about doing a bigger European tour next spring, but that is still so far away... I really hope that we will be able to do some dates in Spain in that tour.

**HaC:** What are you doing besides your punk-activities/your punk life?

**Ollie:** What exactly is a punk life? I just finished a course for retraining for media design and will be travelling for some time. I want to try to travel as much as I can in the future and see new places, get to know new cultures and people. Also I want to concentrate more on musical projects and when I will be back I gotta find a job to earn some money to live.

**Stephan:** When I am not to occupied with my extreme punk life you will find me in the university, studying our earth's geography and geology. I like it a lot because it's really interesting and gives me an additional view on the world. I wished I wouldn't have that many obligations but I guess that's what I have to face right now. Besides that I am frequently working on a market that sells ecological products to earn some money to live and pay my hobbies, which are skating and surfing.

**HaC:** How is the vegan front in Yage doing... still as active as it always was?

**Ollie:** Yep, still active and although I don't like the label that much I can say that the front has one member more.

**Stephan:** Steady growing that massive front... no, no, I also don't like that vocabulary and the others don't do as well. That's one of the things I like most about Yage: there aren't any obligations, like that you have to be vegan or anything—that would be quite weird—but if we are touring everybody is paying attention to that aspect and when we eat then it is in the most cases vegan. There are fights sometimes about food, for example when there isn't that much vegan food but a lot of vegetarian stuff... but more a funny thing than a real fight about food.

**HaC:** Recently I saw the new TV-spot of Mercedes with a song from Texas Is The Reason.

Well, it didn't surprise me too much—what do you think of that combination?

**Ollie:** Well, I would have to know the exact circumstances to give you my opinion. It's pretty weird, especially because it's Mercedes, but you know, that I also have acted in commercials (for a German beer, called Diebels) and I'm totally happy with the decision because it's pretty possible that another person would have spent the money from that job for some shitty crap supporting some crappy concern. On the other hand we talk about Texas Is The Reason and Mercedes and I would honestly have to think more about it. It's a pretty difficult decision and it's what I have said already before: you can use their methods and structures to create something positive in the end, but there are limits. Mercedes is such a limit, I think.

**HaC:** Please comment on the following: "Maybe these 'rock' types don't see it this way, but speaking as someone who has never been lured by the slippery slope of pseudo concerned UPC code post hardcore bullshit, common sense tells me that no matter how many reggae songs you write about human rights, your audience will still 'rock out' and drink wine coolers. Then they'll go home and fuck like dogs to your politically concerned kick ass tunes. The medium is the message!" —Adam from Born Against

**Ollie:** Sorry, but I'm not sure how to get sense into this.

**Marc:** Because I have the feeling to partially understand what good old Adam is trying to say, I will make a short comment on this... when I get this right, he is basically saying that you can only induce radical change by using music of you radically deconstruct everything that keeps you mentally sleeping. Back to "face kick"-theory... a very interesting idea that Born Against have always shown with a certain consequence at their shows or by the way of their aspects. I have talked about that already; like how strong the integrative power of the system is these days and how you can basically sell everything, even your own

e n e m y . Therefore the idea to create music that lets people feel bad or disgust or simply music that they don't appreciate like all that harmonic corporate pop-bullshit seems p r e t t y interesting to me. it's like saying right from the start:



we don't agree. But on the other hand I don't think that this is the only way to provoke resistance and contradictions in people. Pretty much the contrary are the guys from Blumfeld doing (German pop group), who are trying to spread their really good lyrics with totally harmless, harmonic pop music. Can't prove it, but I do think that Blumfeld are able to provoke contradictions in people and that they do make people think about things with their way of doing things. Subversion through affirmation.



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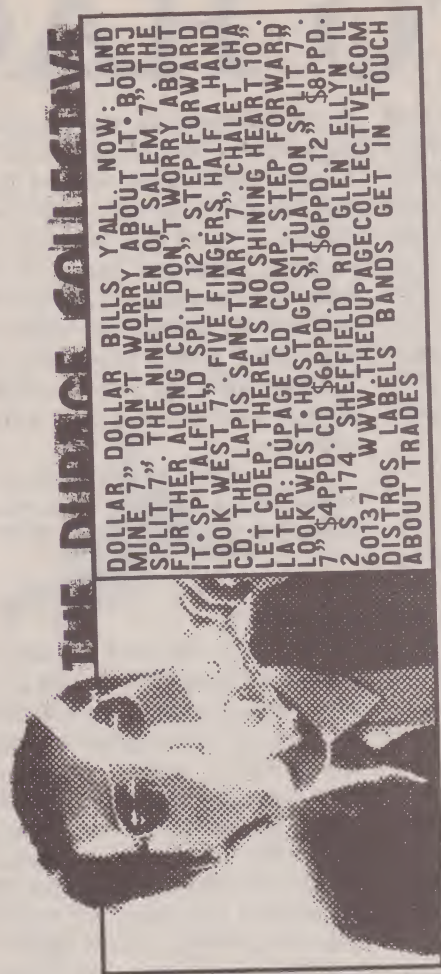
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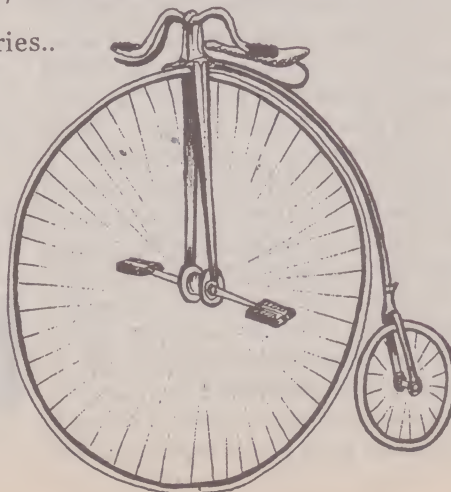
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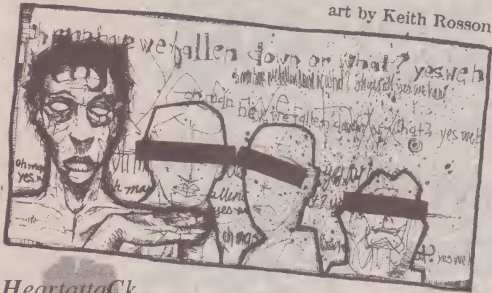
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# LETTERS TO HAC



**HeartattaCk,**

I am sick and tired of every punk 'zine I read wasting paper with shit about whether a band or artist is punk enough. Who cares? Listen to whatever fuckin music you like. Everyone has a dark musical past. We all loved (or love) some band that we're too ashamed to tell our friends about. Come out of the musical closet.

Just remember that the punker than thou types are boring fucks, who are to scared to admit their past life. Punk purists are boring fucks, as boring as a religious nut who talks about Jesus non-stop, a hardcore straight edge type who shits you constantly about how you have fun, or a nazi who wants a pure white society. Purists have no life, and like nothing better then telling others they are wrong, while hiding their dirty secrets.

Listen to what you want, whether it's System of a Down, Britney Spears, Econochrist or The Oppressed. If you have a problem with the label they're on, then wait a bit and get it at a 2nd hand shop, that way no money goes to the big capitalist label, just to some little shop owner, even steal it if you can. Don't steal from the little shop, steal it from the big chain store, they're covered by insurance.

Stop wasting your time arguing about bands, artists, clothes, etc and do something more constructive with your time. Get a life.

—GRéBO;

tongue\_ov\_truth@yahoo.com

**Hi HaC,**

Thanks so much for doing the 30+ punks issue. I was around when MRR did theirs and I'm still fascinated by the subject. I haven't hit the 3rd decade myself but I'm very close... For about 2 years I've been thinking of doing a 30 years and up punk 'zine and you've reinforced my interest to do so. I'm calling out to all the aging punk rockers to get in touch and tell their stories. I don't know if this will be a one-off like my *Sick Punks* 'zine or something that continues... we'll see.

Thanks to Lisa and Leslie for

keeping *HeartattaCk* going. Thanks to Kent for sticking with it for so long. It'll be sad to see you take a leave of absence but kudos for getting out before getting bitter! Nothing kills the punk rock spirit like running yourself ragged until you start despising the thing you once loved. If 20 year old punks had this knowledge I bet there'd be more 30 year olds in the scene...

—Siue/130 Clinton St. #27/  
Toronto, ON/M6G 2Y3/Canada;  
bk913@ncl.ca

**HeartattaCk,**

Hello. My name is Eric Devin. Some of you may know me as the kid who put out the Summertime comp, or the kid who did the 'zine *Life And How To Live It*. I felt the need to write this letter last night. I was reading a book, Ian Carr's splendid Miles Davis biography to be exact, when I felt sleep calling to me. It was my first night home after my first semester at college, and before that work at summer camp, so really I'd been away for a good 6 1/2 months. At any rate, I slipped getting out of bed, and as I fell, knocked open the cupboard under my bed. Underneath was a stack of *HeartattaCks*, which I had given away back in 10th grade. I spent the next three hours looking through them, a flood of memories coming back. For, you see, I have been out of "the scene" for quite some time, not buying records or going to shows. But, when I saw those magazines, it was like I was fourteen or fifteen again. I went to the basement and dug out my box of unsold distro records and played some of them. Why had I turned my back on this music? It was so alive. I've been listening to jam bands, jazz, and hip-hop for the past eighteen months, telling myself that I was done with hardcore.

I first got into hardcore when I was twelve. My parents got me an Earth Crisis CD for Christmas, and soon after I bought my first copies of MRR and, a bit later, *HeartattaCk*. I was all of fifteen when I decided that I wanted to put out a CD. That came out when I was sixteen. Soon thereafter, there was, in my perception, a lapse in the music I liked, as many of my favorite bands at the time (Orchid, Jeromes Dream, and Usurp Synapse) had broken up. I turned more towards the free jazz and hip-hop 12"s that I'd had a mediocre interest in. I thought about all of this last night, asking myself, was I done with hardcore at 18? It is a youth-oriented movement, to be sure, but 18? I decided to listen to some of the stuff that I had and see if it still spoke to me the

way it did during those tumultuous years of high school. Sure enough, it did. I listened to some mp3s on the internet and realized that this stuff still exists, I just have to look harder.... As of this moment, I consider myself a "scenester" reborn. I realized the hurt I'd caused people (you know who you are) by being a flake, and vowed to resurrect my record label. Something new from Kordova Milk Bar will be out in 2003, I promise you. Shit, I'm back and it feels so good!!!

—Erik Devin/University of Rhode  
Island/Union Express/50 Lower College  
Road Unit 959/Kingston, RI 02881

**HeartattaCk,**

First off, thank you very much for sending me issue #36! It's nice to know that when a fellow punk rocker is in need, he can still count on fellow punkers to come through at a moment's notice. Maybe the scene hasn't changed that much, but what do I know? The last show I went to was sometime in late 1995. I've been locked up every since, so I have not been physically part of the scene for almost 7 years now. All I know is that I wrote to you about two and a half weeks ago from this lonely prison cell begging you to please send me something to keep my mind content, and that I had nothing (stamps, etc.) to send to help out. And, just like that, the cop was at my door sliding me issue #36! Anyway, I'm not going to tell you my whole life story. I wouldn't want you and your readers to get bored to death, but I just wanted to let all of you at *HeartattaCk* know how much I appreciate what you have done for me. Looking out for a fellow scenester is what it's all about, even when he or she is slammed down behind concrete and steel and not slamdancing on a showroom floor to the sounds of good music!

Hopefully by the time issue #37 hits the streets I will have something to send to acquire it, but if not hopefully I can get my hands on it somehow! And to all of you out there who might have something lying around that would keep my mind busy—letters, 'zines, etc.—send it to me please!!!

Stand strong and stand proud!

R. Kashey/K-49531/CMC AD SEG  
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## heartattack

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# TOP 10 LISTS

## Steve Snyder

18 January Santa Barbara Peace March • The Good Terrorist—Doris Lessing • Dr. Bloodmoney—Philip K. Dick • Leapfrog #7 • SUN CITY GIRLS—live • CHRIS CUTLER—Solo CD • Blackalicious—Blazing Arrow • Mildred Anderson—Person To Person • Assif Tsahar conducts the New York Underground Orchestra • John Fahey—Georgia Stomps. Atlanta Struts...

## Fil

THE INSURGENT—Loudest Letter 7" • TRAGEDY—Vengeance LP • BEFORE THE FALL—demo • Glass Houses #2 • BORN DEAD—7" • INFECT—Estrepito 7" • SENTIMIENTOS OPRIMIDOS/DIRTIES—split 7" • DEAD THINGS—Because Sometimes You Just Want to Ride Your Bike to the Show CD • SHARKS KILL—7" (thnx to Clara) • becoming vampires off the lost boys bridge

## Chuck Franco

ALL IS SUFFERING—CD • BURIAL—demo • RIISTETERROR—7" • EXPERIMENT IN TERROR—CD • JUNIOR MURVIN—Police and Thieves LP • TERRORIZER WORLD DOWNFALL—LP • ENGLISH DOGS—To the Ends of the Earth LP • THE WEIRDING WAY, HANK MUSGROVE and the mother fuckin MANIACS, especially Keil for hooking us up the show in Vegas • The ever increasing multi fronted oil hungry corporate sponsored earth raping life squandering and virtual grand data base terrorists war on terror • JOE STRUMMER—RIP, words I cannot find to explain what an impact his music and life had on me and hundreds of thousands of others.

## Dylan Ostendorf

DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE—all • THE FICTION—LP33 12" • HEROES SEVERUM—Wonderful Educated Bear CD • KENJI—Demonstrations '02 CD • THE LORD OF THE RINGS—Books and Films • MOGWAI—Rock Action CD • Monsoon Wedding—DVD and CD soundtrack • NO CHOICE—Dry River Fishing CD • OZOMATLI—all • PINBACK—all

## Jonathan Lee

BURY THE LIVING—split w/ draw blank, 2nd 7", and new recordings • LA FRACTION—Aussi Long Sera le Chemin LP • LIVING UNDER LIES—LP • SOOPHIE NUN SQUAD—live • TRAGEDY—live and Vengeance LP • SELFISH—live • SEEIN RED/SHIKARI—10" • LIGHT THE FUSE AND RUN—1,2,3... 7" • SONG OF ZARATHUSTRA—A View From High Tides LP • ARTICLES OF FAITH—Volume 1 and Volume 2 LPs (nice to see everything in one place)

## Timothy Sheehan

AMANDA WOODWARD—10" • REDENCION 911 split 7" with HOMAGE TO CATALONIA • HIGHSCORE—Unsuspecting Actors in a Bad Soap Opera LP • BURY THE LIVING/DRAWBLANK—split 7" • WORLD BURNS TO DEATH's unfortunately titled LP • MINUS TIDE/TURN AROUND NORMAN—split 12" • TO SEE YOU BROKEN—A Thief, a Poet, an Enemy 7" • GREAT CLEARING OFF/SOUND OF FAILURE—7" • AGAINST ME!—The Disco Before the Breakdown 7" • TRAGEDY—Vengeance LP

## Matt Average

Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers—movie • BLOWBACK—Remember Oneself CD • UGZ Speed Trials at Burnt Ramen • JR EWING—live • BLACK EYES CLUB—demo CDR • CALLOUSED—... Still Failing World EP • OHUZARU—Thrash Is Business 5" • ANTISCHISM—discography CD • The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test by Tom Wolfe • KILLED IN ACTION—Exit Wounds CD

## Scott Torguson

ABILENE—Two Guns, Twin Arrows CD and live • WILCO—Yankee Hotel Foxtrot CD • JESUSEATER—Step Inside My Deathray CD • Bowling for Columbine movie • BLACK HEART PROCESSION—Amore del Tropico CD • OUTHUD—Streetdad CD • MDC—Now More Than Ever CD • Sacramento • V/A—20 Years Of Dischord box set • TED LEO/PHARMACISTS—Hearts of Oak CD

## Ravi Grover

meeting DEAD PREZ, ERIKA BADU, COMMON SENSE, and freed Chicago Black Panther Fred Hampton, Jr. @ Joe's • El Crimen del Padre Amaro—controversial film out of Mexico about the Catholic Church • Bowling for Columbine—Michael Moore's film • Clamor 'zine • New York City & Miami, Dec 2002 • meeting Erick Sermon at La Guardia airport • "The Big White Lie"—Khabar magazine • AALIYAH • "Percy vs Monsanto: the New David and Goliath" & "This is what peace looks like"—Satya magazine • Karma Cola by Gita Mehta

## Chris Crass

My Gender Workbook by Kate Bornstein • Clare Bayard's 'zine danger third rail is electric • Viggo Mortensen who plays Aragorn in Lord of the Rings wearing a "no more blood for oil" T-shirt on Charlie Rose's talk show and saying that George Bush is like Sarumon spreading evil over the world. • The group Jews for a Free Palestine and their organizing in the Bay Area • My Dangerous Desire: A Queer Girl Dreaming Her Way Home by Amber Hollibaugh • The 'zine Sexual Assault in Activist Communities that can be ordered by 'writing activistsagainstsexualassault@hotmail.com' • The People's Institute youth-run Freedom Schools in New Orleans • The Santa Rosa peace and justice community bringing 3000 out against war on Iraq • National Conference on Organized Resistance in DC • My 10 week old cousin, Natasha Viola Janowski

## Lisa Oglesby

STATE OF PARANOIA—demo • BORN DEAD—7" • LIGHT THE FUSE AND RUN—1,2,3... 7" and songs from split 7" • AGAINST ME—The Disco Before The Breakdown 7" • The CIA Makes Science Fiction Unexciting #1 'zine • DEAD THINGS—...Because Sometimes You Just Want To Ride Your Bike To The Show CD • FUNERAL DINER/ZANN—split 7" • TRAGEDY—Vengeance LP • DEATH FROM ABOVE—Heads Up CD • THE DEAD ONES—LP • I'm Johnny & I Don't Give A Fuck #5 'zine • V/A—20 Years Of Dischord box set • AND I CAN'T WAIT - Hardcore Justice 7" • Slave #7 'zine



# LET'S BUILD LIBERATION: A CONVERSATION WITH CHRIS CRASS ON ANTI-RACISM AND REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE • INTERVIEW BY GEOFF

**HaC:** Could you give a brief history of your own organizing and activist work?

**Chris:** I got into politics in high school when I was 15. My best friend, Mike Rejniak introduced me to politics and punk rock. We had a group at our high school called the United Anarchist Front (UAF) and we handed out flyers, did an underground newspaper, put on anti-corporate and anti-war protests. The Gulf War in '91 and the Rodney King verdict had a major influence on us. I was involved in student organizing at my community college in Orange County. We were a multiracial, Latino/a led coalition fighting against fee hikes and for Chicano Studies and immigrant rights. In the UAF we started up a study group, went through a really powerful and painful examination of sexism in the group and started up a Food Not Bombs chapter.

I moved to San Francisco and worked with the Food Not Bombs chapter there. I studied political science, women's studies and ethnic studies in college. FNB was my primary work for about 8 years. Through FNB I was doing lots of projects in the larger anarchist community in the Bay Area. Anarchist Cafe nights, anarchist contingents at marches and work with affinity groups around civil disobedience actions. In '99, I got involved with an anti-racism study group for white social justice activists. Sharon Martinas of the Challenging White Supremacy (CWS) Workshops put it together and invited me to join. After the mass actions in Seattle, Sharon and I talked about doing anti-racism workshops specifically for the mostly white sections of the global justice movement. This fit with the new direction that I wanted to be going in after Seattle. I was really impressed in Seattle with the level of training and political education that was available and how important this is if we want to have a participatory and effective movement. Being in FNB all those years, we always talked about wanting to do political education and skills trainings but we never had the time. It was clearer to me that so many gateway groups face this same dilemma. Lots of people get their first involvement in activism through them, but their isn't the time or capacity to train people or help people develop a life long commitment to social change. Gateway groups, groups that provide a way into social justice movement more broadly, groups like FNB and Earth First! and student groups.

Through CWS, we developed a project called Anti-Racism for Global Justice (ARGJ). We've been doing workshops around the country with student groups, community groups, with the Ruckus Society and at conferences. This past year I worked a lot with Students Transforming and Resisting Corporations (STARC) on a summer organizing institute for student activists. It was an eight week program where folks did internships with community groups, did anti-oppression workshops and skills trainings to develop leadership and organizing skills to help build the student movement. Through ARGJ our focus is political education, leadership development and networking and that's the bulk

of my work at this point. I'm part of Colours of Resistance, a multiracial, anti-racist, women led network of organizers on Canada and the US working to further anti-racist politics in the global justice movement and support the leadership of radicals of color and women in that movement. I also work with an anti-racism and anti-war group called Heads Up and am currently part of two men's discussion groups exploring male privilege and patriarchy and working to be anti-sexist allies.

**HaC:** How is anarchist political theory (primarily developed in the context of the 19<sup>th</sup> century European workers movement) relevant to the struggle against white supremacy in 21<sup>st</sup> Century U.S.?

**Chris:** That's a good question. I'm going to take it in chunks. First, the issue of 19<sup>th</sup> century anarchist political theory and white supremacy and then I'll say what has been most relevant to me. The problem of anarchist political theory in general is that there just isn't much of it. There's a reason for it and I believe it's one of the major shortcomings of both anarchist theory and practice. Most of the widely influential anarchists of the 19<sup>th</sup> century believed that revolution was both a singular event that would usher in a new society and that it was right around the corner. Writing in the 1880s Peter Kropotkin, the major anarchist theoretician internationally, estimated that it would be here in the next 10 years or so. This has a serious impact on how people organize and develop theory.

Anarchist ideas and theories were largely articulated in speeches, articles and pamphlets meant to inspire revolution in working people. I'm not trying to argue that anarchists didn't develop theory and extremely important ideas, but I think that main lessons of anarchism come from people's practice. By most historical accounts the anarchist movement was the most powerful from the 1880s-1930s. The most widely read and arguably most influential book from that time period has been Emma Goldman's autobiography, *Living My Life*. The emphasis on practice and anarchist theory as embedded in practice rather than texts is both its strength and weakness. More recently, look at Seattle. Three of the major contributions of anarchists in Seattle were the use of direct action, affinity groups and consensus based decision making. These are tactics, organizing structures and decision making processes, but each of them represents anarchist theories of how social change happens, how society should function, the relationship of individuals to groups, how different forms of power operate and how power should be shared, personal empowerment and collective responsibility and accountability. So in Seattle you have an upsurge of activism as people not only shut down the WTO but also speak about the importance of the methods used.

The strengths of this, I would argue, are the organizing lessons and models of making social change that anarchist practice has for our work today struggling against white supremacy and all systems of oppression. The weakness goes back to the impact of thinking revolution



is on the horizon. From what I can tell, the idea that revolution is a singular historic event seems to come from dominate Western political theory (liberal democratic enlightenment ideas as well as Marxism). Revolution as a long haul struggle or continual process is articulated repeatedly in liberation struggles led by people of color, indigenous people and women. If it's one big event, then all energy gets put into making that happen. If it's a long-term struggle then in addition to taking on oppressive power, we need strategic planning and developing theory that informs the strategies we use.

In the 1920s Italian anarchist Errico Malatesta somberly looks back at anarchist activity over the past 40 years that he's played a significant role in and says, "It must be admitted that we have shown very little concern with the ways and means for the achievement of our ideals". I mention all of this because when I was 15, 16, I was reading Emma Goldman and Kropotkin and I started thinking that revolution was around the corner, that it was inevitable and we just need to spread the word and get more people ready. For a long time I broke things into two categories, there were anarchists who believed in genuine revolution and then everyone else was a reformist of one kind or another.

This is where anarchism and white privilege and other forms of privilege converged in my life. Through white privilege I've been trained to universalize my experience as normal, just as I was trained to universalize my experience as middle class, being male and heterosexual. As anarchism claimed anything short of calling for revolution was reformist, my privilege led me to have a very narrow idea of what a radical was, what being radical looked like and so forth. A radical looked like me. It wasn't that I consciously thought this, rather it was the underlying framework shaped by white supremacy, patriarchy, heterosexism, capitalism and the state. This framework made it very difficult to see organizing happening in communities of color or working class communities. Or if I could see it, I had a narrow interpretation of it, as reformist. I'm not saying that there aren't many struggles out there that are oriented to winning positive reforms, rather I'm saying that my framework minimized the importance of reform oriented struggles. Minimized in that I viewed reform struggles based on their tactics isolated from the larger context, movement building and strategy. This has negatively impacted my understanding of many progressive and radical struggles led by working class people, people of color, women and queer people and I think it's a major reason why the anarchist movement is so white, middle class and male dominated. Relationships between people and groups need a level of respect that my 'more radical than you' attitude damaged.

So, how is anarchism relevant to fighting white supremacy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? As I've come to understand anarchism through both theory and practice, the fundamental concept and constant challenge or tension is the goal of building societies that benefit everyone,

where structures of liberation and empowerment have replaced systems of oppression and exploitation. I know this is vague, but another concept of anarchism, articulated by Emma Goldman, has been that we who grew up in chains will be able to envision and practice liberation in the course of struggling to get there. This reminds me of the Paulo Freire saying, "we make the road by walking." This connection between the struggle and the vision is intentional. Goldman and others who witnessed the Bolshevik Revolution talked a great deal about how the means that we use prefigure the ends of where we want to go, so that we can't say that the ends justify the means as the ends reflect the means used to get there. If we can abandon the idea that revolution is right around the corner and that it's just this one big insurrection, then I do believe that the organizing lessons and models for social change that anarchist practice offers are relevant to building mass multiracial, anti-racist, feminist, queer and trans liberationist, intergenerational, anti-capitalist movement working for collective liberation. I also want to be clear that I think anarchists have a lot to learn from other folks as well. I believe anarchism is relevant to building movement and has much to offer, but is neither the movement nor the one right answer.

**HaC:** What movements and organizing traditions do you draw the most inspiration from? Why? What lessons do they hold for radicals today?

**Chris:** There are so many. The best way that I can answer this is through books and why I would recommend that people read them. The Haymarket Tragedy by Paul Avrich, because it's one of the most amazing chapters in the history of both anarchist and working class organizing in this country and provides so many insights and lessons into organizing for reforms with an expansive vision of social change. It was also an important movement to me because it gave me something to be proud of as a young white radical.

Sweatshop Warriors by Miriam Ching Louie about immigrant women fighting for social change. The immigrant worker centers around the country are deeply inspiring. Louie looks at the leadership of Latina and Asian women sweatshop workers in the US taking on capitalism, white supremacy and patriarchy. The organizing strategies used by the worker centers are ground breaking in how they look at multiple forms of oppression and build the power and leadership of communities most negatively impacted by transnational capitalism and winning. The anti-corporate campaigns that have come to define much of student activism and the anti-global capitalism movement were started by immigrant women workers.

The Free Women of Spain by Martha A. Ackelsberg because the Spanish revolution and civil war of the 1930s represented the climax of long term radical organizing against fascism and how everyday people were making revolution in their daily lives. Mujeres Libres and this book about their work offers important lessons about collective organizing and feminist practice during a historical upheaval. Spain also

provides lessons about Stalinism and the importance of the struggle against authoritarianism.

I've Got the Light of Freedom by Charles Payne about the civil rights movement and the organizing tradition of Ella Baker, the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee and thousands of working class and poor Black folks who made history. The organizing models, styles of leadership, the centrality of youth and women's leadership and the tactics they used provide critically important lessons.

Barbara Smith's The Truth that Never Hurts is a collection of her essays that articulate a Black feminist politics of race, class, gender and sexuality. Smith has been involved in feminist, queer liberationist and racial justice organizing for over three decades. In the opinion of many, Smith along with other women of color feminists have and continue to develop the best of radical, realistic and relevant analysis for making social change.

For specific organizations that exist now check out From The Road: Snapshots of Living Resistance, a 'zine for liberation by Sonja S. and Jennica B. They traveled around the country and met up with dozens of amazing groups doing amazing work. Then they put together a 'zine with information and contact info for about 20 of those groups. The 'zine looks at a range of groups from queer organizing in the South, to training institutes like the Highlander Center and immigrant rights groups in the South West. You can get a copy for \$5 by writing to 648 Prospect Pl. #4R/Brooklyn, NY 11216.

**HaC:** What advice do you have for white radicals trying to figure out how to be anti-racist allies to folks of color?

**Chris:** That's an ongoing question that is open to debate. I think there are lots of different ways to be an anti-racist ally and that through practice we reflect, evaluate, keep learning, make mistakes, be gentle while also critical of ourselves and keep our eyes on the prize of liberation and struggle with guilt, shame and fear that are part of the process. Three ways that I think about being an ally are personally, working with individuals and then organizationally. These are all things that other people have told me, almost all women and people of color. Personally, I grew up in a segregated area in Southern California. It wasn't until a Black studies class in community college that I was ever in a situation where white people weren't the clear numerical majority. I had some friends of color and I would say that while folks of color should not be expected to school white people about white supremacy/racism, be ready to say thank you if and when they do. It was very important for me to learn about struggles led by communities of color. This was through events put on by organizations of color, doing ethnic studies classes and women studies classes, working in groups led by folks of color. However, the main way that I see being an ally to folks of color is working with white people to challenge white supremacy and work for racial justice. This is the strategy that I pursue and I'm glad that other white folks are pursuing



other strategies and that we can learn from each other.

Working with individuals. I think it's really important that white people support each other in doing anti-racist work. Having other white folks who are doing this work to talk with and struggle with each other, learn together, support one another and hold each other accountable is really useful and highly advisable. Working in groups is much more useful in challenging institutional injustices as well as overcoming personal insecurities that hold us back from the work. Relationships with folks of color and multiracial organizing is absolutely critical, but again, the responsibility needs to be with white folks to work with each other and not expect it from folks of color, even though folks of color end up doing most of this work.

Organizationally doing solidarity work if you're an all white group or mostly white is really important. Finding out what organizations of color are doing in your area, checking out events, asking people in groups that you decide you'd like to work with, "we're such and such group, is there anything useful that we could do to support your work". Be ready to take no for an answer and also be real about what you can and can't commit to doing. Do what you say you're going to do. Developing relationships with other organizations can take along time, but that's really what movement building is about.

In figuring out how to be allies I'd suggest that white folks read [A Promise and a Way of Life: White Antiracist Activism](#) by Becky Thompson, chapter 7 of Gloria Anzaldua's [Borderlands/La Frontera](#) and the writings of Helen Luu, Pauline Hwang, Laura Close, Chris Dixon and Laura McNeill on the Colours of Resistance website [www.tao.ca/~colours](http://www.tao.ca/~colours).

**HaC:** How can white militants balance defending their own political community from state repression and supporting communities of color that face far greater state repression everyday?

**Chris:** I think that there are a lot of variables and local circumstances that will influence different strategies. I know that in Portland, Oregon, where you live, the state is going after the mostly white radical community there. The grand juries threatening people with many years of imprisonment and the police violently busting up a recent peaceful protest against President Bush. For me, the question goes back to movement building. I think that the best defense against state repression of white militants and supporting communities of color is building movement that prioritizes the issues of communities of color. What do I mean by prioritize? Here's an example. I work with a group called Heads Up in San Francisco that came together after Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> as an anti-war, anti-racist group of white folks. We knew that state repression was coming down on many sectors of society, including white radicals and that that the most negatively impacted would be folks of color. So we looked to organizing in communities of color that we had political affinity with and/or felt that their organizing was

in line with our goals. This has mostly focused on immigrant rights work, supporting anti-war efforts led by organizations of color and solidarity with Palestinian liberation. In addition to working in solidarity with organizations of color (going to them and asking how we can be of use), we also do political education events for mostly white activists groups in the global justice and anti-war movement. The main goal of these events is to help build anti-war movement that has anti-racist politics and looks to the leadership of radicals of color while simultaneously developing anti-racist white leadership. This has been a slow process, with many challenging questions.

What does this have to do with defending white militants. Well, if one of the people in our group was targeted by the state, the relationships that we've built over time would help us mobilize support and solidarity from a broader cross section of activists and constituencies. That's really the key to movement building, developing relationships with people. Think about when you get a phone call for some political event. Does it make a difference if you have some kind of positive connection with the person calling? In general I'm more likely to do something if I'm asked by someone I know. What this means to me is that defense against the state is about having positive relationships with lots of people, developing positive relationships between organizations and working for broad social change that fights state repression of white radicals, but also structural violence and injustice against immigrants, refugees, homeless people, sex workers, day laborers, working people, transgendered people, folks of color, women and queers.

**HaC:** As a white male what do you see as your self-interest in doing anti-racist and feminist work?

**Chris:** I think this is an important question to ask ourselves. Why are we doing this work, particularly anti-oppression work when we experience privilege on the basis of that oppression. I'll just talk about a couple of reasons. One, fundamentally I believe they are both catalysts to move our movements forward and win concrete victories on the path to liberation. I want to live in a better society where I don't pay the majority of my money to a landlord, where I don't have to be worried about money when getting food. I want access to good health care and all kinds of basic human rights and I want the people around me to have the same thing. So, I think all of us want to see our work for social change succeed and history has shown that unless we are actively working on racism and sexism then they'll undermine our work and set us back. The majority of leadership in nearly every radical social change effort has come from women, people of color, working class people, queers and transgendered people and doing anti-racist and feminist work has helped me to recognize this, learn from this and value it.

Secondly, my own personal development has benefited so much from doing anti-racist and feminist work with lots of

different people. Generally speaking, the people doing this kind of work are really inspiring and courageous people who have a lot to teach not only about organizing and movement building, but about living our lives with the principles that we have and the enormity of injustice that exists. It can be really depressing and disempowering and feel utterly hopeless as I'm sure you've experienced. Meeting people who not only fight back, but are also able to keep trying to build healthy communities and celebrate life, it keeps me sane and gives me hope. The other thing about building healthy, loving communities is that white supremacy and patriarchy tear us all apart in very different ways for sure, but the negative impact is felt in our personal relationships, our political work and in our daily lives. On a basic level, I want to experience meaningful loving relationships and vibrant healthy communities and patriarchy and white supremacy and the ways that I've internalized white privilege and gender privilege have seriously damaged me and people I love. Anti-racism and feminism, for me, are part of the path of personal healing and social liberation.

**HaC:** What gives you the hope to carry on in this dark time of resurgent fascism?

**Chris:** I watch a lot of movies and love pop culture. It's true, when I'm feeling down, I often just chill and watch a romantic comedy or something. My friendships and the people I love, who I go to when I'm depressed. Putting energy into loving, supportive friendships is high on my list of what organizing and activism is all about. Dealing with this political time period? Well, knowing that we're in line with the majority of the people on the planet in our opposition against the U.S. war on Iraq. That's hopeful. I was reading Chomsky earlier today and his ability to analyze the world and tear apart the official doctrine and make sense of things from a radical framework is hopeful. I also just read this Buddhism book by Pema Chodron called [When Things Fall Apart](#) and it's really good. About facing fears, insecurities and finding peace with groundlessness, all that good Buddhist stuff. She actually says that we would actually be better off abandoning hope, that the flipside of hope is fear. Like, 'I hope it happens, because I fear that it won't', that kind of thing. That hope places the focus on what could happen in the future, when really the only time we have to act is now. I'm not saying that we shouldn't have hope, but Pema reminds me that it is the concrete steps we take today that help us get to where we need to be. Knowing that people like us have made history and made the world a far better place gives me hope in times like these. The challenge is deciding what steps we take today to build movement and make history now.

*Geoff is a revolutionary activist and aspiring anti-racist committed to overthrowing all systems of domination. He is active in Portland, OR in movements against imperialist war abroad and racist repression domestically. He co-edits the 'zine A New World in Our Heart, and seeks dialogue with people trying to create a strategy for a revolutionary left in this time of political crisis (and, yes, sometimes he takes himself too seriously).*



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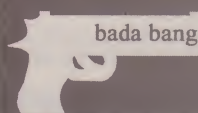
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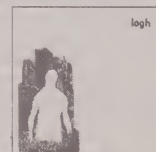
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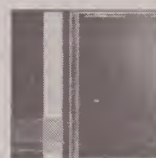


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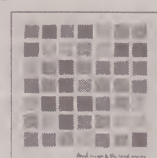
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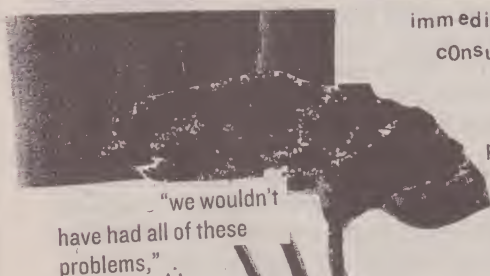
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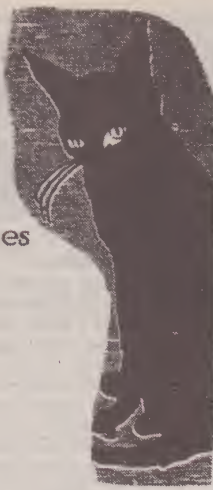


## Pitching at Inclines

With

Eric

xxx



Last issue of *HeartattaCk* was remarkable because of the columns. They seriously blew me away. One, however, got under my skin more than usual. That was the CrimethInc column. I have a few problems with CrimethInc in general, but I want to be very honest in saying that some of what they have to say makes sense. Usually, however, (and last issues column was no different) they are quick to ruin it all. This is a movement in two parts... first:

### Part One: Why CrimethInc and Rush Limbaugh Are So Similar

Whenever ultra-right-wing-conservative talk show host Rush Limbaugh blasts any of his long time on-air enemies, he does it with a flourish. Along with that flourish is a harsh statement of his ultimate correctness on any issue. From "femi-nazi's" to "environmental wack-o's," Rush claims to know every fact relative to the argument and is 110% sure that he is Right (and correct). That is, until someone challenges him with a correction of his claim. Perhaps someone comes along and cites the accurate figures in the face of Rush's aforementioned flourish. Well, then Rush is just an entertainer. You see, he shifts from learned politico to mere talk show entertainer. So what if he wasn't perfectly accurate? It's show biz! He's JUST an entertainer.

CrimethInc, in *Days of War Nights of Love*, has a whole section on hypocrisy (starting on page 127). In this section, as mentioned in the first paragraph above, the CrimethIncers start off by making sense then ruin it all. This section of the book starts off by saying that hypocrisy is something that we as activists run into a lot. Agreed. Hell, my band even has a song about the fact that living up the ideals that you set for yourself by attempting to live an anti-authoritarian lifestyle is difficult and sometimes not always possible. Up to this point they make sense. Then, on page 130 it says this:

"So be proud of yourself as you are: don't try to get the inconsistencies of your soul to match up in a false and forced manner, or it will only come back to haunt you. Rather than holding inflexibly to a set system, let us dare to reject the idea that we must be faithful to any particular doctrine in our efforts to create a better life for ourselves. Let us *not* claim to be innocent, let us *not* claim to be pure or right! But let us proclaim proudly that we are hypocrites, that we will stop at nothing, not even hypocrisy, in our struggle to take control of our lives."

This chain to the so-called merits of hypocrisy is a wonderfully built in release when someone takes them to task for falling short of making sense or being inconsistent with the concepts of anti-authoritarianism. You see, if they espouse some violent "tactic" (note that the Orwellian double-speak is not limited to Big Brother in these days... violence is tactics... violence against property isn't violence... the intimidation and fear that go along with street thug behavior is okay... as long as it's a black masked window smashing thug) that seems completely out of line with ethical anti-authoritarianism, it's all a part of the hypocrisy by which they live! Or what if we exerted time and energy making our lives closer to our ideals? What if we bought things that were worker friendly and had as small an impact on the environment as possible? Oh wait! That wouldn't be hypocritical enough. After all... we must embrace that! It's just like Rush Limbaugh... we're serious, until we can be criticized... then we're just entertainers or self proclaimed hypocrites.

### Part Two: We Let It Happen Three Times, Let's Not Fall for a Fourth

I've been involved in the Hardcore scene for about 12 years (give or take a year). In that time we've let three waves of bullshit infest our ranks. The first were the Krishna folks. Yeah, the brain handles are cute and it all seems nice and harmless... until you actually read the *Gita* and realize the ridiculous anti-woman, anti sex, stance it takes. Or how about the stuff about people acting outside of their dharma? "God" forbid if you're a worker and want to be something else... then you're lying to yourself and to "God." Yeah... harmless... just like the second thing we let seep into hardcore... Christianity. Another big mistake. The third is a more subtle foe, but no less dangerous. The creeping tide of conservatism rears its head much more than most of us would like to admit.

So, we have Krishnas, Christians and Conservatives running around in the Hardcore community. Am I saying that we should "ban" certain people or things? No. I don't care what they do, but I certainly won't be a part of it. Now we're confronted with the latest visitor to the hardcore community that I want nothing to do with... street thugs.

In the third paragraph of the CrimethInc column in the last *HeartattaCk*, the author explains revolution in daily life. Again... thus far I'm right with ya! I think that exploring this topic is not only smart, but totally necessary and worthwhile. Then... LIKE ALWAYS... they ruin it. They say:

"Revolution: a child would witness, for the first time, exultant crowds filling the streets after his favorite team won a football game; and for that precious hour, as strangers embraced like fast friends and benches were torn from bus stops to feed bonfires, his world was suffused with a magic possibility that seemed as natural as it was new."

A football riot? This is supposed to be "revolutionary?" This is supposed to be in some way anarchism? Where is the respect? Where is the responsibility for your own actions? Where is the mutual aid? Silly me... I thought THOSE dumb old things had something to do with anarchism... ethical anarchism. But flipping

through *Days of War Nights of Love* I see that I am wrong. In the book they praise a killer because of his "Hijacking of the Washington Post." This is a sympathetic essay on the wonderful merits of Ted K. (You might remember him as the Unabomber). In the essay, we're told that the Unabomber was just "a single person [who] evaluated his situation and decide[d] upon a course of action that he [felt] was right." Am I supposed to take this as revolution? Or anarchism? I hope not, because if their version of a free society is letting people blow others up simply because they disagree with what they think, then I don't want any part of it. That's the same logic that cops use. I don't want or respect that, so why would my opinion change if the mustached cop was replaced with the black-masked-black-bloc window smasher?

I also learned in *Days of War Nights of Love* that I should "...buy yourself a liter of gasoline and a bottle. It could be your last purchase ever." Again... I must have had all that stuff about being kind, non-violent and anti-authoritarian wrong. Why waste my time dealing with the war on drugs? Or researching the way taxes are used in this country and resistance to war taxes? Or the work that can be done for peace? There are bombs to make, apparently. Or, wait... is it all hypocrisy and I'm being silly taking their writing seriously?

What I am serious about is not letting the real work of good people be usurped by street thugs who like to smash things and call it progress. I am writing this on December 31, 2002. We are on the dawn of a new calendar year that looks bleak. With George W. Bush war-hawking all over the globe real and important work can be done. We can make this new year better than the last one, but it won't happen with more bombs being thrown or windows being smashed.

Don't worry about the CrimethIncers. Let them do what they will. Hopefully the violence will burn them out quickly. If, however, you want to work for some real and positive change, here are a few places to start:

Write to *The Match!* (One of the best Journals of Ethical Anarchism anywhere): PO Box 3012/Tucson, AZ 85702

Find out about War Resistance and War Tax Resistance. Write the War Resisters League: 339 Lafayette St./New York, NY 10012; (212)228-0450 or check the web sites [www.warresisters.org](http://www.warresisters.org) for information on the League or [www.warresisters.org/wtr.htm](http://www.warresisters.org/wtr.htm) for info on War Tax Resistance

Contact: Eric at PO Box 162/Turtle Creek, PA 15145; [xericx@telerama.com](mailto:xericx@telerama.com)



The club is so smoky I can hardly breathe. I'm on my way to the bathroom and dripping in sweat from dancing hard. For some reason I stop abruptly. Maybe I'm thinking about changing my course and heading over to get a pop. Turning around I see a guy following me, practically on top of me. He has to screech to a halt so he doesn't



run into me. "I think you are really cute so I decided to follow you." Not sure how to reply I mutter, "Uh, that's nice. How are you?" He asks me who I am and I respond by telling him that I met him at a different bar a few nights ago. He tells me how drunk he is and asks my name. "Daryl" I say, "and you're Michael right?" Amazed that I actually remember his name. I can't say that I would pick him out of a crowd to sleep-with, but I think he's cute nonetheless.

I know that I've caught his eye, but have no idea what to say next. He starts some small talk about the music and in my head I ask him if he wants to go make out since it would be easier than talking. I take a big sip of my pop and we stand inches apart. Unfortunately I hardly say a thing to him, nod and smile in response to his banter. I tell him I'm there by myself and he invites me to hang out with him and his friends. I sense he's a bit nervous too and he turns to talk to one of his friends. Quietly I drift away suspecting that he doesn't even notice I'm gone. I am used to slipping away from situations where I feel nervous.

Later we cross paths again and he asks where I went. I quickly tell him I went to dance thinking he wouldn't know the difference given that he was on the other side of the room. Seconds later he says he'll stop pestering me and that we'll talk later. "We'll talk later," may as well be the kiss of death. It means I've lost my chance. I want to tell him to stay, that he wasn't pestering, that I'd like to talk, but none of it comes out. Instead I grab my jacket and leave. Alone.

On my ride home I think about how many times this happens to me, how many of my conversations play out this way with the words swirling about my insides daring me to let them out. I wonder why I panic when people show any interest in me. I feel like I'm in grade eight all over again and realize I have no idea how to date, how to talk to people, how to show I'm interested in other people. In grade eight some of my classmates started dating, but it seemed like a foreign world to me. At our graduation party I saw some of my classmates holding hands and knew I wasn't in the same world as them. I don't think I even had a concept of what sexual desire was or why anyone would want to date.

I feel like I've always *fallen* into my relationships. Like I could be friends with practically anyone if we were in the same area for long enough time. The people I have always hung out with have mostly just been in the same place at the same time I was. Sure there have been exceptions, but by and large I have only ever had a handful of friends. I often try to convince myself that I can pass off mutual space sharing as friendship, but it leaves me unfulfilled. I say that I've fallen into relationships because I haven't ever really made much effort to make them happen. I just wind up going along for the ride if I can relate to people who show interest in me. Well, it's not *that* passive, but it's something close. This is not to mention my fantastic ability to get a crush on just about anyone willing to pay attention to me.

The truth is I don't really know how to relate to people, how to interact with people. I keep trying to figure out where this all came from, where I learned to sublimate my desires, how I learned that asking for what I want is bad. The

closest I can come to an answer is through my relationship to my parents. As a child I was rambunctious and loud, never afraid of saying anything. It didn't take long for me to realize my parents, more specifically my mom, didn't appreciate this. "If you've got something to say, say it and it's done," my mom would repeat to me as though it were a mantra. I was told to shut up so many times I've gotten to believe I really *don't* have anything to say. This seems a bit simplistic though. While the relationship with my mom has certainly contributed to my shyness the reality is likely much more complex.

More than any place else this suppression plays itself out in my desired sexual relationships. Essentially everyone I have had a sexual relationship with has taken the initiative to start things. I've learned to wait for people to say that they like me, that they are interested in me, waiting and waiting. Friends often recount how they are hit on or always make out with people at certain events. On the other hand, I can go to the same things and not even talk to anyone, feeling like I have secret invisibility powers. I look at, and watch, the people I am interested in psychically inviting them over to talk to me. Maybe it's all that after school special brainwashing or something, but I seem to believe that the best way to show people you are interested in them is by ignoring them, or so my actions would say.

I guess it's possible that all the people I am interested in are thinking the same things, sending out psychic messages to have people come and talk to them, but the odds seem against it. I never learned how to date. I never learned how to ask people to do things with me, to even hang out. I have a feeling that most people take this as snobbery or disinterest on my part. People don't know how to interpret shyness and I can say this from experience. Rather than shy people bringing me out, just the opposite occurs. I become even more shy and panicked trying to figure out what to say and my mind goes blank. I start looking for any way out of the conversation, hoping there can be a distraction, anything really, that will let me off.

I feel that all of this is only compounded by the digital revolution or whatever you want to call it. I'm becoming more afraid of the phone and look for reasons to email people instead. I'm beginning to feel the same nervousness about calling people that I do when I meet someone new. I often have to psyche myself up to call people, putting it off, feeling my heart race as I dial the numbers. It makes me sad to know there are so many shy people in the world. To know that we won't get what we want because we aren't willing to ask for it to speak out, to make a ripple. Being crippled by shyness can be extremely isolating and frustrating. It stops me from talking to people I would like to know better, it stops me from meeting new people, it stops me from being able to express my anger, it stops me from being able to express my attractions.

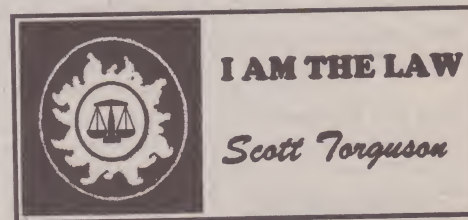
If nothing, I have these words. I can tell you what I'm thinking about through writing. When I write I don't have to think or worry about the pauses. I can stop and look up words, I can work on things until they fall together saying what I want them to, hiding behind the fact that you don't see my face when I write.

I guess all of us get comfortable with certain things in our lives, acting in ways we are familiar with, acting in ways that don't surprise our friends, only changing in small amounts so we can still be recognized, so people can still make sense of us. My shyness has become habit. I'm mostly used to not saying things, to having things not turn out how I imagine, or want, them to. I feel that this has happened to such a degree that I actually wonder if the people I want to meet, that the people I feel like I need in my life aren't more hypothetical than anything. Like I'm searching for ideals and not really actually people.

As an example, my life in Toronto is mostly very boy-centric and something that I'd like to move beyond. In Regina I was often the only boy in my circle of friends while in Toronto somehow most of my friends are boys. I'm not really sure how this happened, but I have a theory that people in big cities like to keep to themselves more. More specifically, the queer people hang out with the other queer people and dissecting that further the boys hang out with the boys and the girls hang out with the girls. The tragic thing is that I don't really believe in all these divisions. I think part of this comes from letting people think I'm gay. I have definitely said it in the past, but I can't really say I believe that anymore. I identify as queer, but to most people that just means gay anyway. Add to this the fact that I am dating a boy and people make assumptions.

I'd like to say that gender doesn't matter in my life, and largely I think it doesn't, but that doesn't explain my desire to date or have more women in my life. However, going back to the whole shyness thing, my attraction to women winds up looking more theoretical than anything. Not really knowing how to approach people basically does nothing to denounce the whole "Daryl = gay" thing. I know there are other people like me who have similar ideas on gender and sexuality that I do, but hiding in the corner doesn't help me meet them. It only makes me think I'm making people up in my head, hoping for their existence as some kind of comfort. It's something I think about a lot, hoping and wishing to overcome my shyness, hoping to meet queer women who are interested in me. Hoping to make sense of things.

Talk to me: Daryl Vocat/241 Logan Ave./Toronto, ON/M4M 2N2/Canada; safe23@hotmail.com



So after my summer, I wasn't really looking forward to heading back to classes in the fall. I worked with a bunch of great people, and now had to head back to hang with lots of spoiled rich kids. One of the ways I dealt with this is to try to check out more shows than before and listen to more records. So I decided to write about some music this time as well as the usual law school stories. Here it goes...

#### I. SCHOOL

The good thing about the second year



of law school is that all classes are elective. First year it is mostly assigned classes, and the electives are limited to a choice between two or three different classes. For the second and third years, the only required class is Professional Responsibility. Other than that, it is up to the student. Believe it or not I avoided Corporations, Corporate Tax, Mergers & Acquisitions, Securities Regulation, and a whole host of other wonderful options. Instead I took Lawyering in the Public Interest, Education Law, Terrorism & Democracy and Evidence. The classes were all great. I was so much happier with them than first year classes. I also managed to avoid many of the annoying people who took other classes and I didn't see throughout the semester.

Lawyering in the Public Interest consisted of once a week 2 hour discussions on the problems facing public interest lawyers. ("Public Interest" is a term that means, basically, although there is some argument, legal services for the poor.) Most of the discussion centered on how to make the best use of limited resources. There are, obviously, simply not enough attorneys to help every person who has a legal issue and can't afford an attorney. What do you do? Do you give some help to everyone, or full service to some, and turn down others? It's really an interesting question. If you are turning people down, how do you decide who to turn down? Many public interest organizations use "first come first serve" to decide. Others try to help those they feel need it the most. This of course creates the problem of how to decide who needs it the most. All of these are very real problems that are, of course, not addressed in most law courses because the focus is to train people to do work for corporations. The class was a welcome anomaly: I actually felt like I learned something useful in a way that I felt was conducive to learning (general discussions.)

Evidence is a must for any attorney who wants to litigate. (Not all attorneys go to court.) I was lucky enough to be able to take evidence from David Rudovsky who is a founding partner of one of the leading civil rights firms in Philadelphia, if not the nation. Both other classes were also interesting. Terrorism & Democracy was a fascinating look at things like the Guantanamo Bay detainees and the USA Patriot Act. Education law taught me everything I ever wanted to know about church and state separation in the classroom. Classes were definitely a much better experience as a 2L, although we'll see how I feel in February when grades come out.

At the end of the first year of law school there is a thing called the writing competition. You do the writing competition in order to make it onto a journal. Law school journals are student run publications where the leading works of contemporary legal scholarship are published. It is really a bizarre system. Before I came to law school I thought that journals were written by students. Not the case. When you get selected for a journal, you edit and cite check articles written by (mostly) law professors. The board of the journal also decides which of the submissions gets published. Now, if you are like me you might wonder if it is a good idea to have second and third year law students decide what good legal scholarship is. It doesn't seem to make much sense to have students with little to no experience

in the law deciding what gets published. Most professions have professional journals where professionals with experience decide what gets published. Welcome to law school. Sure it doesn't make sense, but it is tradition.

Penn has four "official" journals. *Law Review* is the most prestigious. Firms and judges really like to see this on your resume. There is also the *Journal of International Economic Law*, the *Journal of Constitutional Law*, and the *Journal of Labor and Employment Law*. If you are interested in checking them out go to <http://www.law.upenn.edu/> and click on "Journals/Institutes" at the top of the page. So to get on any of these journals you must do the writing competition. I said "fuck you" to the writing competition. Why? There are two reasons. First, the writing competition itself is a bullshit frat hazing. It started one day after finals ended. The first 4 days were the "editing" portion of the competition. You are given a 7 page document containing 2,000 errors. You have 14 hours each day (I think that's the right #) to look up the errors in the given materials. For example there will be something in a different language and you have to figure out that it is the Polish Bible and how to correctly cite the Polish Bible. After the "editing" portion is done you have a few more days to write a short essay. Everyone I talked to who has participated said it was absolute hell. Why is it done this way? It's the same reason frats make initiates do stupid shit and the Clambers piss on you if you want to join. Personally, I would get pissed on by a Clamper before I participated in this bullshit. Second is the power structure of the journals. After doing a year of tedious cite checking as a 2L you hope to get on the board for your third year. How do you get in the board? The outgoing board chooses. In other words, "dating" someone on the current board will help your chances. If you don't get on the board, your resume doesn't look as good and you are stuck doing shitwork for another year.

Luckily there is an alternative, the *Journal of Law and Social Change*. The journal does not participate in the competition and has a much different slant than the other journals. J-LASC tries to publish challenging, progressive articles. All you had to do was answer about two pages worth of questions and then wait to find out if you are selected. I submitted my answers and was selected to the journal. The people on this journal are the most inspiring people I have met at the law school. Everyone is doing cool stuff outside of school and the discussions we had were amazing.

Before I move on to music stuff, here is a great example of the idiots I go to school with. A kid named Danny Yunger organized a party for law students and sorority girls. Really. I first found about this when someone emailed one of his pre party hype emails to the Feminist Working Group email list. What was funny is that whoever (anonymously) sent the email totally bagged on the guy as well. Of course he deserved it. I mean, fuck, he is basically (in my opinion—don't sue me Danny) trying to set up a situation where law school boys can get some action with young girls. It is a purposeful attempt to create a power imbalance. The law school boys will be generally older and will be making over \$100K in a year or two. The whole thing was fucked. Dude flipped

out, from what I hear, that someone sent his email around for some reason. I really just drove to campus for a class then drove away for undergraduate classes. Is this shit common at most colleges? Did I just miss out because I wasn't part of the college "community?" Whatever. Fuck that guy, and his parties.

## II. MUSIC

You ever had one of those shows where you go and are just blown away by a band you have never seen play before? It doesn't happen much to me anymore, but it happened recently. Before we get to that though, the one time that sticks out the most in my mind happened in the spring of 1990. I was on spring break from my senior year in high school, hanging out in my bedroom listening to Forced Down when my mom came in and told me I had a phone call. It was Mike D. from Forced Down. He said they were coming through town that night and wanted a show. I called around to some friends and hooked up a living room. There were about 10 people that came out to see them play. They absolutely tore the roof off the place. It was amazing. Everyone who was there talked about that show for years afterwards. I remember talking to Mike a couple years later and he said when he talks to the other guys in the band they still talk about that show. I still get chills thinking about the show. I always wanted the bands I was in to be that intense every night we played. That show may have a lot to do with wanting to kill bandmates who complained about small turnouts. It was so inspiring.

Anyway, it happened again recently. I decided to take a study break to go see Retisonic and Abilene in Philly. I had the first Abilene CD and I liked it. But I had no idea what I was in store for. Since that CD they added Fred Erskine on trumpet. He added so much to the band. I was mesmerized in much the same way I was 12 years ago. There was maybe 20 or 30 people at this show, but it didn't matter. The band played like their lives depended on it (like every band should, but most don't.) I was talking about it to everyone that would listen. And I still am. Go see this band. Their second CD is amazing as well. By far the best album of 2002, although Jesuseater's *Step Inside My Deathray* and *The Pupils* LP come close.

I still love hardcore. I just need to be reminded every so often why. Shows like this one really do the trick.

You can get a hold of me: [storguso@law.upenn.edu](mailto:storguso@law.upenn.edu).

## Shittalking with OB

### The Bore Against the War

Man I am really trying to get behind leftist politics in this country, but every time I get remotely excited the Left goes and plays itself. Nowadays the Left has an excellent rallying point, President Bush and his two wars: the one he wants to wage against Iraq, and the won he is waging (and winning) against civil liberties in this



country. Now I cannot stand George Bush and the bullshit he is peddling. I cannot stand it so much that I dragged my ass down to City Hall on a cold ass Fall afternoon to protest his trumped up, and frankly quasi pathological, war against Saddam. There were lots of people there, probably around 2000. Everyone was milling around, full of energy. And what do the leaders of the rally do? They talk. And talk, and talk. And talk and talk and talk some fucking more. They thank every group involved individually, all 100 of them. Then there were numerous speeches about how much the war sucks. Hey idiot organizers, everyone at the rally knows the war sucks and is a bad idea—that is why we were out there in the freezing cold on a Saturday afternoon. The oration continued ad infinitum, but my attention was taken by an argument between a West Philadelphia activist and some guy selling Che T-shirts. The activist stated that the gentleman must stop his capitalistic practices immediately, as they were wholly inappropriate for such a rally. She then went on to say that most people at the rally were anti-capitalist and he was hurting the cause. The guy countered that he was DIY and just trying to spread the word through his T-shirts, which, incidentally, no one was remotely interested in purchasing. The activist went on and on repeating herself, much like the people giving speeches. The guy went back to (not) selling his T-shirts.

After about 45 minutes of oration, the march finally commenced. We left City Hall and marched down Market Street through the retail district. This was the high point of the rally and the sound truck was blaring speeches to the sidewalks, as it should have been since this is where the rally could reach and influence people. There were also hackneyed chants (think “throw your hands in the air, and wave them like you just don’t care,” but for the black clad and dreadlocked set), but these were at least something for people to check out, slightly more riveting than the alternative, old Quaker with a peace placard. Now some people who are much cleverer and more dedicated than I concocted an excellent scheme for propaganda decimation. They took soft pretzels, wrapped an anti-war fact sheet around them and handed it out to passer-bys. I mean who doesn’t like free food? Well it seems that many a shopper on Market Street was on the Atkins’ diet, ‘cause by the time I got to the Liberty Bell my bag remained nearly full.

Now I think the Liberty Bell is an excellent symbol around which to stage a rally, but in attempts to reach the masses, this locale fails miserably. First, ever since the 2001 terrorist attacks it is like a military zone around Independence Mall and tourism, and hence foot traffic, is way down. Secondly, the new Constitution Center is under construction across the street, so marchers were constantly dodging backhoes as we had to listen to still more speeches. And this was not Malcolm X up there. This was some derivative, joe-ass, boring sloganeering. Not only was this not making for any new recruits, it was thinning the ranks of the believers. Finally it was time to turn around and march back up Market. But wait, the cops wanted us to go a certain way. Hey guess what, when my civil liberties are shrinking daily I don’t particularly care what the cops want me to do, especially when

I am at the very time protesting the evisceration of the Constitution. Is this rally not an exercise in civil disobedience? Or is it just permissible dissent—fine so long as it does not really threaten the plans of Bush, Cheney, Ashcroft, and the Philadelphia Police? How utterly uninspiring.

My conclusion on this march—it was a success, despite itself. And the reason it was a success was that a whole lot of people showed up and it looked damn impressive moving on Market Street, which made for some nice pictures that found their way into the news media, and really got the word out that many people think Bush’s war can suck it. But as with the recent rightward results in the November elections, the Left’s plan of action is as played as an 8 ball jacket and sells just as well. People are fired up about Bush and his dumb ass war, but they don’t want to hear and do the same old, same old. It’s the same speeches and the same tactics, with unfortunately, the same results. It’s time to update the program, and cash in on the growing discontent the USA.

Now on to somewhat less weighty topics, like punk rock and this ‘zine. I understand that when it comes to reviewers *HeartattaCk* has to take what it can get, and most of the reviewers do a fine job. Hell, McClard, Average and that guy from Albany have probably forgotten more about punk music than I ever knew. However when certain, blatant misinformation is put forth by a reviewer (information that is not opinion), it must be corrected. One such example is Mr. Ott’s review of The Black Widows Stop a Beating Heart record. I can’t speak about the profundity of pits at their gigs, nor the jockiness of the Patterson brothers, but I can state with the utmost conviction that Rob Point and Thommy Browne are not meatheads. Has Ott heard of Endpoint, By the Grace of God, or Falling Forward, these musicians’ previous bands? Has he read the lyrics to “Days After” or “Beneath the Blue”? How about Rob’s noted tough guy job as a special education teacher? These things are far from jocky. I’d be laughing at Ott’s ignorance, but a lot of people who read the reviews in HaC don’t know this shit, and may be apt to take Mikey’s ill informed opinion as the truth. I also noticed Mr. Ott was taken to task elsewhere by Kent, so maybe they better start giving out hardcore aptitude tests before they give out the records there at the Ebullition Warehouse.

Locally, Fall turned out to be a pretty good, gig wise, what with R5 and the First Unitarian Church winning their legal battle with L & I, and many good bands coming through the area. The above mentioned Black Widows played a wifebeater free gig at Funarama. Denali (now with programmed beats—more Portisheady than ever) rocked the Church. Time in Malta, Snapcase, and, surprisingly, Boy Sets Fire all turned in good sets at the Trocadero. Strike Anywhere blazed at Hamilton Street Café and then later in the week Ensign (as the Descendents) capped an very fine Halloween hardcore show at the same venue. An interestingly booked Planes Mistaken for Stars rocked a room of hipsters and 15 year old OPIV fans at a Temple Common Rider/Hot Hot Heat gig. But Autumn’s best shows had Tragedy headlining. I doubt I have to sell any *HeartattaCk* readers on this band, but this shit killed, especially the cold, wet, and horribly overcrowded ABC-NO-RIO gig.



## ravilution

### I. War on Terrorism - arguments for peace and improving National Security

In my last column I talked of points to bring up to convince people in our communities of why war is not a suitable answer in response to terrorism. By the time this column is printed we could be in Iraq right now, possibly even North Korea, or maybe another terrorist attack could have occurred. Either way, it is important to sway the average person on the streets about this subject because it’s these very people who will determine whether a war is popular or not. Politicians base elections on popularity—if a war isn’t popular then their chances of being reelected lessen.

Below are some arguments I’ve compiled, used myself in conversations, or have read somewhere else. I haven’t used any cliché anti-war arguments like “killing is wrong” or “war is terrorism.” Such viewpoints don’t work because if they did, the US wouldn’t be involved in so many military campaigns. I believe that if one argument doesn’t work then you should have as many other possible arguments to back up your position. Unfortunately a flag waving patriot could care less if a few thousand civilians in another country are killed in a bombing campaign, so to use this stance is a waste of time. On the other hand those very same patriots could be concerned about young American soldiers going off to war and sacrificing their lives. A nationalist should be convinced that it’s not worth the amount of dead Americans to go to war when there are clearly other options.

We all know about how the CIA and the American government funded, trained, and supported many of the terrorists that are now attacking us or their own people. But guess what? Dropping this fact doesn’t seem to work either. I have seen it used in practically every debate I’ve seen on news channels. The opponent of war will say something like “We gave Saddam Hussein chemical weapons in the ‘80s in his war against Iran” or “We trained bin Laden in Afghanistan during their war with the Soviets and gave the Taliban \$48 million in May 2001 to combat opium growing.” Now and then a pro-war debator will outright deny such a thing ever happened. Most of the time, though, *they easily shrug it off*. It happens every time without fail and is simply a waste of time to bring it up. Instead, those in anti-war circles need to find other points to bring up to further the cause for peace. There are numerous other ways to cripple or topple tyrannical regimes besides violent confrontation. What needs to be emphasized is that economic policies can easily cause as much damage to a country as military action can (look at South Africa’s apartheid government crumbling or the fall of the USSR). The reasons listed here should also be used when writing law makers or the media. Also realize that most of the explanations listed are inter-related and overlap into each other.

Change comes about through



confronting people's attitudes different from yours, not talking with people that already agree with your beliefs or isolating yourself among like-minded people. I didn't write this column to preach to the choir. My purpose of writing this is in hopes that readers will use what is stated here to convince other Americans of why war is bad for national security in the long run. I also hope readers will take action by voicing their opinion to those who have the power to wage war.

**1. American soldiers shouldn't have to risk their lives for the agendas of greedy politicians**—An invasion of Baghdad would require 250,000 American ground troops to endanger themselves simply to get to one single man. While there, they would have to take over the city block by block, and not only have to fight off Hussein's special forces who are known to be fiercely loyal, but also armed Iraqi civilians who plan to defend their homes. The number 250,000 is the population of a small city in America. Is it worth it to jeopardize this many lives? Even if successful in ousting Hussein, it's estimated that America would then have to occupy Iraq for an additional 10 years and it could cost the US \$1 trillion.

One third of terrorist acts are carried out on American targets, including embassies, consulate buildings, and military bases. This all stems from the fact that US troops are put in harm's way by being stationed in other countries. It also comes from when US leaders decide to take sides in controversial conflicts instead of playing a neutral role in a peace process. It's American soldiers who are risking their lives policing other countries and it's American civilians who end up dying needlessly in response to terrorist retaliation. Here is a list of some violent incidents directed at Americans where our military presence was felt:

-1983: Iranian terrorist group bombs US embassy in Beirut, Lebanon killing 17 Americans. The US Marines and US Navy were patrolling Lebanon in support of Christians engaged in civil war with Muslims. Several months later, a suicide bomber blows up barracks in Beirut, killing 290 Marines and injuring 200.

-1985: Car bomb explodes at US Air Force base in Germany killing 2.

-1986: US Navy sails into Libyan waters, Libyan forces fire a missile, and US forces fire back destroying a missile site. That same year an American hostage is executed in Libya.

-1987: Pan Am flight 73 is hijacked, resulting in the deaths of several American passengers.

-1988: A club catered to American troops in Italy is blown up resulting in 5 deaths; Pan Am flight 103 is bombed killing 200 Americans; in Peru, Columbia, and Costa Rica, American libraries are bombed.

-1989: The wife of a Naval Commander dies from a pipe bomb explosion; US Army Colonel shot in front of JUSMAG Embassy in Manila, Philippines.

-1990: 2 US airmen shot down at Clark Air Force Base, Philippines.

-1991: US helicopter shot down with 2 occupants murdered in El Salvador; US Air Force sergeant killed in bomb explosion in Athens, Greece.

-1992: US Army vehicle driving through Panama is fired at killing both driver and passenger.

-1993: Explosion in front of US Embassy,

Belgrade; 2 rockets fired at US Air Force Base in Japan, followed by 4 rockets fired at Air Force headquarters a week later; 18 US Army Rangers killed in viscous mob attacks in Somalia.

-1995: Housing provided for American troops stationed in Saudi Arabia is car bombed killing 5 Americans.

-1996: US military apartment buildings truck bombed, killing 19 US airmen and injuring 500+ people.

-1998: Grotesque car bombings of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.

-2000: USS Cole suffers damage from bomb explosion in the waters of Yemen.

-2001: United Airlines flights 93 & 175 along with American Airlines flights 11 & 77 are hijacked resulting in attacks on World Trade Center and Pentagon, thousands killed.

-2002: US Marine gunned down in Kuwait; US diplomat shot in Jordan.

If American troops are going to have a presence in other nations they should be there as part of the United Nations' forces, otherwise US soldiers are seen as an occupying army from an imperial super power. National defense money should be invested here in the USA *securing and defending our nation from future terrorist attacks*, not defending wealthy monarchies or oil reserves, not securing land for oil pipelines, and not carrying out the personal agendas of American politicians and multi-national corporations like Shell and Chevron. Washington State Congressman Jay Inslee, said that "It is not a victory to strike down one tyrant and breed 10,000 terrorists." Those 10,000 terrorists will target Americans, including American soldiers. Is it worth the cost?

Questions that should be asked to war advocates: "Does it make sense to provide money, weapons, training, and troops to countries that could turn around and use it against us?" "Would you want your son or daughter to risk their life defending countries like Saudi Arabia or Japan, when clearly the royal family and the Japanese government have *more than enough wealth* to fund their own national defense? Shouldn't we be spending that defense money on the USA, such as improving our flawed airport security, giving higher salaries to low paid firemen, or better securing potential targets like nuclear reactors or our water supply?" "How would you feel if there were troops from another nation with military bases on American soil? Wouldn't you want them to get out of your country?" "Should more than a quarter of a million Americans risk their lives to take out a single dictator, when we can just easily work side by side with the UN and the global community in supporting Iraqi freedom fighters and directly cutting off Saddam Hussein's funding by not purchasing his oil?"

**2. US energy policy must change**—Oil funds terrorism, simple and plain. The Saudi monarchy has made an immense amount of wealth from selling oil to the US, and the billionaire fortunes of bin Laden and Saddam Hussein originate from the sale of oil. The largest consumer of oil in the world is the United States. It's no coincidence that Iraq produces the largest output of oil on the planet after Saudi Arabia. US occupation of Iraq would mean controlling the 2nd largest oil reserves on the globe. The FBI is currently tracing Saudi money to see if the royal family might have

possibly funded the 9/11 hijackers. Ultimately though, that money can be traced back to Americans. When Americans fill up their tanks in their gas guzzling SUVs (14 mi/gallon) and Hummers (7 mi/gallon!!), part of the money that is generated goes to the Saudi monarchy, who in turn use part of their oil profits to either fund or support terrorist schools and activities.

American dependence on oil must be gradually phased out and there are several steps that need to be taken to start this process. The first step is to increase the fuel efficiency of automobiles, also known as Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards. Only 8% of the world's population owns an automobile, and out of that 8% one third of those owners live in the United States of America. The higher the fuel efficiency of the car the less gas that it'll require. There are cars that are both safe and fuel efficient already being sold in Europe and Japan. American automakers need to follow the lead of such places and stop making excuses. The second step is to increase funding for public transportation, pedestrian, and bike programs. This includes financial support for improved, higher speed Amtrak, constructing or improving light rail in metropolitan cities, improving or increasing the number of buses, and building more connected sidewalks and bike paths. The goal here is to encourage less driving and more use of public transportation and walking. The last step is to implement an increased use of renewable energy. The rays of the sun and the breeze of the wind are free. Renewable energy is a practical option that could easily be used right now as state governors and city mayors are scrambling to figure out how to deal with deficits and tight budgets. The formation of solar and wind power facilities would create jobs, directly helping out the economy. It would also save money for states in the long run from spending less of the state's budget on power generated from fossil fuels.

Money makes the world go round: you gradually reduce or cut off the money which buys oil you cut off the money that directly funds violence, violation of human rights, environmental destruction, and terrorism.

**3. Fix the economy first**—Between February 2001 and February 2002, 2 million Americans were laid off. Even those who still hold jobs are feeling the tight grip of recession. According to the US Census, poverty rates have risen and the income of middle class households have dropped. In the year 2002 there were 12 million American children living in poverty. Among industrialized nations the US has the 2nd highest rate of child poverty rates after Russia, which is something to be ashamed of considering that wealthy people like Oprah Winfrey are making \$300 million/year! Yet somehow we're second in child poverty? The total number of people living below the poverty line amounted to 33 million in 2002, and the number of Americans without health insurance amounted to 41 million.

Does it make sense to dedicate money to more wars plus post-war occupation when we are still spending money on the War on Terrorism and America has yet to recuperate from an economic recession?

**4. What about the victims of September 11th?**—9/11 destroyed lives. Is it fair to divert resources away from looking for bin Laden to



support brand new wars? Isn't it an injustice to the victims of 9/11 by not focusing on dismantling al-Qaida and finding out bin Laden's whereabouts? Isn't it a slap in the face to all victims of terrorism to allocate so much man power (250,000+ troops) and money (\$1T) to a new war, when so much is still unresolved from the September 11th attacks? Shouldn't our resources be directed at working with the global community to pursue justice for the victims?

**5. Humanitarian Aid: start a war on global poverty!**—In 1974, the CIA reported that "Washington would acquire life and death power over the fate of the multitude of the needy." This report came out in response to the fact that there was/is more than enough food on the planet to feed everyone, yet somehow third world nations were/are suffering from food shortages *while America was/is giving subsidies to farmers to store away excess food.*

Poverty breeds violence and terrorism. It's no coincidence that Adolf Hitler came into power in Germany right after World War I when Germans were suffering from economic hardships. It's no coincidence that high rates of gang violence and crime occur in American neighborhoods where there are no decent paying jobs. It's no coincidence that guerrilla rebels armed with AK-47's are from impoverished peasant communities in the jungles of South America. It's no coincidence that most Palestinian suicide bombers come from refugee camps where forcibly relocated families are living in run down shacks. And it's definitely no coincidence that Osama bin Laden found so many loyal supporters in Afghanistan, one of the most poverty stricken nations in the world, or that the al-Qaida network is strong in nations where people are making \$1/day.

The common misconception is that if we go to war to liberate a nation, the local population will praise and support us as if we are their saviors. The other misconception is that by flexing our military might we are somehow scaring off terrorists and preventing future violence against us. The reality is we instead make a lot of people hate us. For decades Israel has been razing villages and using military force against innocent Palestinian civilians, thinking that this is the only way to stop suicide attacks. Similarly, the government of India has been using military force against Kashmiri civilians in pursuit of terrorists. Why then do terrorist attacks continue on such a large scale to this day? Why are military tactics not shutting down terrorist organizations but instead helping their recruitment process? Obviously, something is not working right.

The convenient use of American military action as a solution to every problem should be replaced with the use of aid and development because this is what will increase the number of American allies. **Even though the USA is the wealthiest nation on the planet, we give less than 1% of our federal budget to humanitarian aid.** Meanwhile a University of Maryland 2002 poll showed that many Americans believe the US gives around 25% of its budget to aid. Percentage wise, the top donors of foreign aid are Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and Sweden. President Bush says terrorists attack nations that "love freedom and

democracy." The top donors are free societies with democratically elected governments, yet we don't see terrorist attacks executed in these nations. We don't see fanatic mobs burning the flag of Sweden, or the extremist clerics referring to Denmark as "the great white Satan." It goes back to that question that is so often asked by Americans: why do they hate us so much?

In the science of epidemiology, there is a saying that "prevention is better than the cure." Meaning, instead of spending resources and money seeking out a cure for a disease, that same amount of time and money could be invested in educating people on how to take care of themselves by changing unhealthy lifestyle choices and improving the environment to reduce the factors that breed diseases. The end result would be preventing the spread of the disease in the first place, reducing health care costs in the long run. Aid is indirectly connected to national security and foreign policy. **For every \$1 from the federal budget spent on humanitarian aid, \$19 is spent on military.** If the USA was to give aid to developing nations it would help out our National Defense in the long run. Aid and development can literally change an environment from being a breeding ground for terrorists to being a breeding ground for partnership and cooperation. Look at Germany and Japan post-World War 2. The US helped rebuild these societies and not only are both these countries politically and financially stable, they are considered American allies. If the US had stayed in Afghanistan after pushing out the Soviets in the 80's and had helped Afghans rebuild their war-torn nation instead of running away and ignoring them, helped out by building schools, teaching skills, developing a trade network to financially stabilize the region, the Taliban would not have come into power, nor would bin Laden have been welcomed as a guest. If the US was to give at least 10% of its budget, with additional money donated by US corporations and wealthy individuals to long term economic development in other nations, we would see less immigrants attempting to come to America illegally seeking jobs, less people looking at us in a negative manner, and less violence directed at Americans abroad. Most importantly it would cause people residing in such nations to view Americans as ALLIES. We would no longer be viewed as the imperial, greedy nation hoarding its wealth and turning our nose to the rest of the world. We would be that nation that people *respected and looked up to* for caring about those who can't afford to take care of themselves. Osama bin Laden has been accepted by people in the Middle East and Africa as a hero because he used his personal fortune to develop third world societies. He used his money to build roads and schools in Sudan—and he was welcomed as a guest because of it. In countries where the al-Qaida network is thriving, bin Laden uses his wealth to open up schools, recruit impressionable young men living in poverty, and provides them with food and education while at the same time training them to become fanatics and terrorists. **It's not as if the United States doesn't have the money!** We should be beating bin Laden to the punch when it comes to development and aid. It should be Peace Corps workers that people are happy to welcome as guests. It should be American teachers overseas

increasing rates of literacy in poorer nations. It should be Americans that offer our help through development rather than simply stationing troops and building bases so that we are perceived as friends and not an occupying foreign enemy. And just as al-Qaida shows videos of human rights abuses by US-funded dictators on al Jazeera, we should show our videos of Americans aiding suffering people and helping build infrastructures in developing nations. When this happens, people like bin Laden will have an extremely hard time convincing local populations that America is the evil empire out to take over the world. If we were delivering medicine and food to Iraqi civilians suffering directly from sanctions, Hussein would have absolutely no way to convince his people that Americans enjoy seeing Iraqis struggle. If we were to pressure Israel to spend money on helping out starving or homeless Palestinians, there would be no way for Hamas to recruit people, because those potential terrorists would look towards Israelis as friends.

When there is less than 1% of our budget being spent on humanitarian aid, it gives terrorists a persuasive explanation that we Americans enjoy watching the world suffer and only care about ourselves.

**4. The Religion Argument**—Regardless of what we believe personally, there's no escaping the fact that most Americans are Christians. There's no getting around this, so instead of trying to convince a devout Christian the Bible contains immoral passages (which is about as pointless as convincing a nationalist killing foreigners is wrong), or taking the intellectually weak path by saying some cheesy cliché slogan like "fuck religion" (which is just about as intellectual as "God bless America") find out what exactly in the Bible would back up arguments that defend compassion, increasing humanitarian aid, social justice, and opposing war. For the last 1700 years people have been using the Bible to endorse slavery, misogyny, homophobia, war, environmental destruction, and cruelty to animals. Turn the tables by studying their manual and giving such people a taste of their own medicine.

Questions that should be asked: "Wouldn't Jesus demand that the wealthy (the USA) give money and aid to the poor (third world countries and Americans living in poverty)?" "Doesn't Jesus say in the Bible to love your enemy?" "Would a good Christian support such an enormous amount of money being spent developing weapons of mass destruction when there are so many people struggling to survive?" To pro-life Christians: "There are 12 million children in America living in poverty. Shouldn't we take care of them first before dedicating \$1 trillion to regime change and occupation of Iraq?" "Wouldn't it be the Christian thing to donate our excess food to hungry children instead of storing it in warehouses or simply throwing it away?"

It should also be pointed out that there are a lot of prominent religious leaders opposed to a pre-emptive strike in Iraq. This includes the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Presbyterian Church of the USA, Episcopal Church's House of Bishops, the United Church of Christ, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. All of whom have written letters to the President and Congress asking them to look at other options besides military action. The Pope has also publicly



questioned the pre-emptive strike of Iraq.

### Take Action!:

I encourage anyone who agrees with what was written here to either send a postcard or an e-mail to the lawmakers listed below. The letter could include the following points summed up in a simple list like this (you can copy it directly or write your own):

Dear (lawmaker),

1. It's outrageous that American troops are risking their lives defending the Saudi monarchy, a government that doesn't allow women to drive, has no democracy in place, and which may have directly funded the 9/11 terrorists. Please pull out American soldiers from Saudi Arabia and let the royal family pay for their own national defense.

2. Oil funds terrorism and lines the pockets of tyrants and dictators around the world. The US needs to break away from oil dependence. Increase CAFE standards, invest in renewable energy sources like solar and wind power, and increase funding for public transportation, rail, pedestrian, and bike programs.

3. Poverty can be a breeding ground for terrorism. Increase humanitarian aid from less than 1% to at least 10% so that people around the world will look to Americans as allies. Aid is a way to reduce and stop terrorist recruitment while increasing cooperation from nations who may distrust us.

4. Before we invest money into new wars and occupying rogue nations shouldn't we first locate Osama bin Laden and fix the economy?

5. We look like a rogue nation when the US chooses to pursue a course of action unilaterally. We should always work hand-in-hand with the United Nations. We also need to stop making excuses and show our support for the global community by reinstating \$34 million back to the United Nations Population Fund, signing on and/or ratifying the Kyoto Protocol, the International Criminal Court Treaty, the Land Mine Treaty, the Biological Toxin Weapons Convention, UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Law of Sea Treaty, and rededicate the US to the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty\*.

### Who to contact:

Anyone who has access to e-mail and/or a printer and doesn't want to type out all the stuff written above can email me and I can cut-n-paste the text to send your way (I can't emphasize enough how important it is you voice your opinion to people in power!)

1. *President George Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney/The White House/1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW/Washington, DC 20500; e-mail: president@whitehouse.gov, vicepresident@whitehouse.gov; tel: (202) 456-2580, fax: (202) 456-2461*

2. *Secretary of State Colin Powell/U.S. State Department/2202 C Street NW/Washington, DC 20520; e-mail: secretary@state.gov; tel: (202) 647-5291, fax: (202) 647-2283*

3. *Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld/The Pentagon/Washington, DC 20301-1155; e-mail: dpcintrn@osd.pentagon.mil*

4. *Your Representative/House of Representatives/Washington, DC 20515; phone: (202) 224-3121; look up: www.house.gov/writer/p/*

5. *Your Senator/United States Senate/*

Washington, DC 20510; (202) 224-3121; www.congress.org lets you enter your zip code and allows you to send an e-mail directly to your Senators and Representatives from its page

6. *UN Secretary General Kofi Annan/United Nations/New York, NY 10017 USA; phone: (212) 963-5012; e-mail: ecu@un.org*

7. *www.embassyworld.com: provides contact information for all Embassies, Consulates, and permanent UN Missions in every nation*

### \*: Do we look like a rogue nation to the rest of the world?

"The Bush administration is 'practically standing alone in opposition to agreements that were broadly reached by just about everyone else,' says Fred Eckhard, spokesman for U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan." —USA Today 7/26/01

- US is the only country opposed to the UN Agreement to Curb the International Flow of Illicit Small Arms

- US is the only nation in opposition of G-8 summit's call for cleaner energy use

- US withdrew from 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and has spent close to a hundred million dollars on failed tests on a Star Wars missile system. **Meanwhile, terrorists are using airplanes and other non-conventional forms of warfare to attack America**

- US is one of four countries that has not ratified the 1979 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

- US is one of 5 nations that refuses to sign the 1989 UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

- US is one of two countries that has not ratified the 1989 Convention on the Rights of Children

- US refuses to ratify the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, ratified by 89 nations

- US refuses to sign on to 1997 Kyoto Protocol to combat global warming, signed by 178 nations

- US refuses to sign the 1997 Land Mine Treaty, signed by 122 nations

- US refuses to sign the 1998 International Criminal Court Treaty, which creates an international tribunal to prosecute genocide and crimes against humanity, signed by 122 nations

- The Biological Toxin Weapons Treaty was ratified by 144 nations, the US withdrew support in 2001

- US refused to join 123 nations in 2001 who wanted to eliminate anti-personnel bombs and mines

- US refused to attend the 2001 International Conference on Racism and Xenophobia in South Africa, supported by 163 nations

- US is one of 3 nations opposed to UN resolution backed by 167 nations calling for an end to the US trade embargo against Cuba

### II. Action Alerts

The easiest way to make an impact is to simply write a letter. Below are links to websites which send emails or faxes on your behalf. All you have to do is fill out your name and address and it does the rest for you (it doesn't get any easier than that).

1. *US Campaign to End Israeli Occupation: www.endtheoccupation.org/act\_now.html; Tell Israel to also use the \$2.1 billion/year military aid they receive from the US on rebuilding homes in Palestinian territory, helping out the refugees, and helping out Israelis in need. Such a step would dwindle the number of supporters in terrorist*

groups like Hamas while easing tensions between Israelis and Palestinians; e-mail: feedback@mfa.gov.il, sar@mod.gov.il; *Permanent UN Mission of Israel/800 Second Avenue/NY, NY 10017; Ariel Sharon c/o Embassy of Israel/3514 International Dr. N.W./Washington, DC 20008; e-mail: ask@israeemb.org*

2. *American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), contains alerts which sends letters to the President, Congress, and others regarding US foreign policy in the Middle East: www.naaa-adc.org*

3. *Global Exchange, international fax/internet campaigns: www.globalexchange.org/getInvolved/*

4. *Minnesota Center Against Violence and Abuse, various alerts: www.mincava.umn.edu/alerts.asp*

5. *Abolish slavery worldwide, sends letters to governments and corporations that employ slave labor overseas: ga0.org/freedom\_action/home.tcl*

6. *Support the rights of Native Hawaiians: capwiz.com/jacl/home/*

7. *International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission: www.iglhrc.org/world/index.html*

8. *eActivist, a whole lot of stuff: www.eactivist.org*

9. *Support the campaign against Huntingdon Life Sciences, one of the largest financiers of animal testing and cruelty in the world: www.shac.net/ACTION/alerts.html*

10. *Pressure the Japanese government to issue a formal apology, monetary reparations, and revision in history books with details of oppression and trafficking of the Korean comfort women who were bonded to sexual slavery during World War 2. Comfort women were kidnapped from territories taken over by Japan and forced to work in brothels, some of whom were raped 50 times or more a day by Japanese soldiers. Also write your Congressman and the Secretary of State asking them to support the lawsuit filed representing 200,000 comfort women:*

a. *Consulate General of Japan/299 Park Avenue 18th Floor/NY, NY 10171; phone: (212)371-8222; emails of Consulate Generals in different American cities (email them all!): info@cgjapanatlanta.org, cgjpnak@ptialaska.net, japan@tiac.net, jicchicago@aol.com, cgjdp@west.net, ryouji@globalbiz.net, info@cgjhouston.org, cgjkc@swbell.net, cgjmia@cofs.net, nojc@ix.netcom.com, japaninfo@cgjsf.org, info@cgjapansea.org, cgjh03@cgjh.org*

b. *Embassy of Japan: 2520 Massachusetts Avenue, NW Washington DC 20008; phone: (202) 238-6700, fax: (202) 328-2187; email: eoiji@erols.com*

Send all correspondence to: Ravi Grover/PO Box 802103/Chicago, IL 60680-2103; sanyasi@juno.com

- Check it: www.moveon.org/technicaldifficulties/

- I was going to write about Trent Lott and how the newly appointed Majority Leader isn't all that different and supports many of Lott's racist policies. I didn't get around to that. With that said, has anyone noticed not once in this column did I talk badly about white people or use the terms honky, cracker, el diablo blanco, or tighty Whitey? Don't get used to it.

- If any of the above terms offend you read an article by Tim Wise titled "Honky Wanna Cracker? A Look at the Myth of Reverse Racism"



at this link, or send me a stamp for a printed copy:  
[www.zmag.org/Sustainers/content/2002-06/24wise.cfm](http://www.zmag.org/Sustainers/content/2002-06/24wise.cfm)

- If you're interested in checking out or submitting a film for an independent film festival organized by 2 upcoming film makers visit:  
[www.2kingsjudgementfilmfestival.com](http://www.2kingsjudgementfilmfestival.com) or for more info contact: 1518 3/4 Micheltorena St./Los Angeles, CA 90026; phone: (213) 308-8354; [d2kingsjudgement@aol.com](mailto:d2kingsjudgement@aol.com)

- The March/April 2003 issue of *Clamor* will be publishing an article I wrote titled "The War on Immigrants" focusing on illegal immigration in America. You can buy a copy for \$4 at *Clamor Magazine*/PO Box 1225/Bowling Green, OH 43402 or check out their website for online ordering: [www.clamormagazine.org](http://www.clamormagazine.org)



On November 2, 2002, a day past my due date, I woke up in labor. Four and a half hours later, in the presence of my partner, several dear friends, my doula and random medical staff, Natasha Viola Janowski was born.

In many ways I am unchanged. I look more or less the same; a bit heavier than I used to be, perhaps a few more gray hairs. My understanding of the world and my approach to life are fundamentally unchanged. My beliefs and my values are unchanged, and my basic personality is the same.

Every minute of every one of my days is now different. Always in my mind is the well being of my daughter. Always in my mind is the awesome weight of the responsibility of raising her well, of creating and maintaining an environment in which she can thrive. Always in my mind is the challenge of raising a healthy child in an unhealthy world.

The way that this has affected me socially/politically became clear to me when an old friend and political comrade visited. I realized that the majority of my mental energy is focused on Natasha, that I could center every conversation I have on her, and I feel defensive about that. As though I should still devote the same time and energy to political work that I did pre pregnancy. Where this defensiveness comes from is a different discussion. But when I think about it, I realize that it is absolutely understandable, and even necessary, for me to be obsessed with my daughter. At eight weeks old, she is completely dependant on me (and her dad and other caretakers) for absolutely everything. And there are so many new responsibilities and options for me to think about now, of course that is what is on my mind and what I am likely to talk about. But I fear boring my friends and comrades who don't have children, and I fear being written off as no longer political, no longer capable of thinking of other things.

I have said before that I think that the anarchist/etc community would be far more of a force to be reckoned with if we were multi-generational. For this to happen, this community needs to embrace children and parents, and part of that means becoming familiar with the minutia of a parent's life. When I encounter people who know what I am talking about, who know what meconium is, who understand the horror of mastitis, who have grappled with the issues I now grapple with, it's very validating. Recently my partner and I (and Natasha) have started getting together with a group of parents and kids from the anarchist/activist/punk scene. Kids range in age from 2 months to 8 years, and the parents range from happy straight couples to single queer moms. It has been lovely to spend time in a setting where both my political identity and my parenting identity are acknowledged, welcome, and encouraged. In that setting, I'm not afraid that if I enthuse about my daughter or complain about sore nipples, people will think I've lost myself. I hope to do everything I can to contribute to transforming all of the spaces in my life into that sort of a space.

Being the mom of a two month old baby isn't all about thinking about how to reconcile that identity with a political identity, though. When I wake up in the middle of the night, and Natasha is snuggled up to my side, when she gives me a huge open grin when I say "oogy-boogy" to her, when she falls asleep on my shoulder with her face nestled into my neck, it is all about love. When we left the hospital, after a night and a day spent in the Intensive Care Nursery and chomping at the bit to get home, I said, "It's like ecstasy without the drug." I just didn't know how else to describe the joy I felt at bringing home my healthy baby girl. I was overcome with joy and reduced to tears. I still am overcome like that on a regular, daily basis. It boggles the mind to look at this amazing baby and realize, I did that.

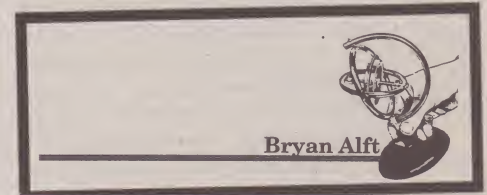
Being the mom of a young baby is also about grappling with issues that people without kids don't have to think about at all. One of the ones driving me crazy right now is vaccinations. It is standard for babies in the US to begin vaccinations at 2 months old. We've already told our pediatrician that we won't be vaccinating before Natasha is 6 months old, but that only gives me four months to do the research around which vaccinations are safe, which ones are safe if done in a particular way, which ones are valuable, which one are dangerous, and which ones are silly. On the silly side is the chicken pox vaccine. When I was a kid, our parents wanted us to get chicken pox, to get it out of the way; because for the most part, chicken pox is safer for kids and more dangerous for adults. So now they have a chicken pox vaccine that wears off at about twenty years old, just when it's getting more dangerous to get it! Why?? What are they thinking?? On the dangerous side is that a link has been made between the MMR vaccine (Mumps, Measles, and Rubella) and autism.

I have never been very factually oriented. I don't really do science or keep specific figures or sources of information in my head. So researching vaccines is an overwhelming and irritating task. If only I could trust the medical establishment... ha. But I have the responsibility of my daughter's safety and well being, and

therefore need to make the most informed choice that I can.

When I think about this, which is just one of the many things that I now have to consider that as a childless person I did not, I feel clearer that not being quite so focused on work that is obviously political is ok. I have a lot to think about, and no one else is going to do it for me.

A friend asked me, after a discussion of Natasha's sleeping and pooping habits, "Don't you hate that this is all you think about now?" The truth is, no. I don't. I am a mother by choice and by deliberate action. I love this.



My clearest memory of my disillusionment with art school is of a long critique. A woman stood in front of some paintings and commented on some politically motivated idea being "so idealistic" with this look of disgust on her face. Everyone nodded and agreed. Apparently, holding idealistic motivations and aspirations for your life and how you are going to use that life to change the world was deemed ridiculous.

People who think they have reached the standard of maturity acceptable in the world of "grown-ups" speak of their past idealism as though it was something silly—like their childhood belief in Santa Claus or the tooth fairy. Maybe in an attempt to feel better about giving up grander aspirations for their lives, they need to distance themselves from their "youthful idealism." Instead, they pretend that their cynicism and "maturity" are proof of great insight into life that a young idealogue does not hold.

My weeks seem filled with mundane bullshit—working and hoping to hold on to some of the idealism I have carried for so long, but that seems to be slowly trickling away. I often feel sick to my stomach for the time I've wasted not working toward my goals. Cynicism seeps into my days as I sit at work, my brain dull with the monotony and bullshit. I wonder if I am slipping further into a world where I simply live for the weekend, a paycheck, and sitting in front of the TV. At times like these I understand why so many give up and spend their lives going through the motions. But, at the same time, it is the vision of what I am working toward that keeps me going back each day.

Too many people confuse idealism with a static condition where one is intolerant of change and refuses to let life experiences shift and mold their beliefs. Or, idealism is synonymous with a lack of experience and a naivete of how the world really works. To me, holding on to one's ideals—the beliefs and ideas that may seem unattainable but that you know are right and worth fighting for—is the purpose of life. More years of experience may mean that my goals have shifted and the ways in which I have pursued them have evolved, but I still work toward the betterment of this world in a way that is true to the DIY ethic and to a just and cooperative way to exist in this world. Am I as idealistic as I once was? Probably not in the same ways. Am I still idealistic? I



hope so, or I don't see the point of living.

What repulsed me about the art school critique was the willingness to step into line and resolve that we cannot swim against the tide. As we get older we are expected to let all that we are passionate for fall by the wayside as we sink deeper and deeper into our lives and leave our youth behind. Anyone who has been in the punk and activist communities for longer than a few years has seen it happen—people give up, drift away, and disappear into the everyday world.

When I signed up for school to become a printing press operator I had this vision of what I wanted to do with my life and the skills I had hoped to attain—it involved a DIY vision of printing my own 'zines and record covers and of taking control of the process and never allowing money or access to limit the expression of ideas.

Five years later, I sometimes go days without even remembering why I headed down this path. Instead I focus on getting paper to run through the press, how much longer until lunch, and how soon until I can get the fuck out of the stink of chemicals and cigarette smoke. I print in a shop owned by assholes; on bad days I print things for even bigger assholes. The desire to carefully deface the quarterly journals for right-wing think tanks and invitations to speeches by Colin Powell or George Bush Sr. I am forced to produce is so strong I throw paper across the room in disgust. Printing for shitty banks, asshole lawyers, and right-wing propaganda mills is definitely not part of the vision I had for myself.

However, printing this garbage gains me access to a print shop where I can print record covers, posters, and 'zines for people in the punk community at a low cost. And, I am getting the experience I need—and the money I will need—to move out on my own, to a position where I can tell such people to go to hell and I can devote my days to printing worthwhile projects.

The problem is that life rarely takes you on so clear a path that you can move forward without your mission stumbling. Things are not as simple as I may have thought they were once upon a time, but the basic ideals that drove me in this direction are still there, even if I forget them some days.

Bryan Alft/Contrascience/PO Box 8344/Minneapolis, MN 55408; balf@isd.net



A few years back I wrote a column on juveniles that had been executed by the American government (ever look back at old columns or opinions? Creepy how much you grow...). Since then not a lot as changed but recent events have made me look me back into it, maybe for nothing else than to cure my curiosity. After a recent US

execution of a juvenile offender and the heated UN debates over the use of the death penalty in the Islamic world, capital punishment should be a more important issue. Especially in the case of the young woman who may get buried up to her head then stoned to death for adultery (though she is divorced and remarried), such policies seem ridiculous.

The United States is one of the few countries in the world with an active system of capital punishment for crimes committed under the age 18. Worldwide countries have been brought together on various human rights issues, including the execution of juvenile offenders, ratifying documents to prevent such atrocities from happening. Yet it still remains an issue and the United States is the leading contributor.

In 1642, Thomas Graunger of the Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts became the first juvenile to be executed for committing a crime in America. In the over three and a half centuries since that time, three-hundred and sixty-two have been executed for juvenile crimes. Since the reinstatement of the American death penalty in 1976, twenty-one have been executed for juvenile crimes and a majority of those executed have been people of color. All of those twenty-one executions have taken place in the American South, thirteen of which have happened in the state of Texas, many under George Bush Jr. Currently seventy-nine juvenile offenders are on Death Row.

In the 1988 Thompson v. Oklahoma case, the Supreme Court held that executions of offenders age fifteen and younger was unconstitutional. Later in the Stanford v. Kentucky case of 1989, the Supreme Court held that the Eighteenth amendment does not prohibit the death penalty from crimes committed at the age of 16 and up. Currently 39 states and the federal government use the death penalty. Fifteen have a minimum of 18 years of age, four have the age of 17, and the other 20 uses 16 as the age minimum.

In August of 2000, the UN Sub Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights claimed the execution of juvenile offenders "is contrary to customary international law." The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, along with countless human right conventions and groups, expressed provisions that prohibit such an act under international human rights standards. In Articles 37 of the UN convention, it states, "Neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offenses committed by persons below 18 years of age." Only the United States and Somalia have not ratified that convention. Similarly the United States, who basically live above international law, have not ratified papers on nuclear disarmament, landmines, world market regulators, and many others. The United States didn't even ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child due to there pro juvenile punishment stance. Being the world's last super power, the United States can not be made to sign/comply with international law and it can not be held accountable for such actions if within the context of American law.

Now the question is raised, how does the United States compare to the rest of world?

Since 1990, only eighteen people worldwide have been executed after committing a crime under the age of eighteen. Out of those eighteen cases, the United States executed ten. The United States is one of only six countries during that time period that have imposed such law, the others being Iran, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen. During the 1990s Yemen outlawed such executions. In fact, since 2000 only three nations still execute juvenile offenders: Iran, Democratic Republic of Congo, and the United States. The last execution of a juvenile offender outside of the United States was in 2000 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Since 2000, Texas is the only place in the world that has executed juvenile offenders. They have had four executions since the end of 2000. Four?!! Seems like all things during the Bush administration it's out for blood, be it on "terrorists" abroad or "evil" American citizens. If the government has the authority to sentence juveniles to death, think of the possibilities the government has toward those described as a threat in the Patriot Act and the Homeland Security Bill. Really it's scary to think how much unseen power they really have.

For an example of how absolutely insane this all is, look at the case of James Terry Roach who was convicted of murdering 16 year old Tommy Taylor and his 14 year old girlfriend Carlotta Hartness in Columbia, South Carolina. At the time of the murder Roach was 17 and had the below normal IQ of sixty-four. While unable to understand the decision, he was advised by his court appointed attorney to plead guilty to the crime. In doing so Roach became the first nonconsensual execution of a juvenile offender since the American death penalty was reinstated in 1976. The Governor of South Carolina and the United States President got pleas of clemency from leaders around the globe including Jimmy Carter, Mother Theresa, the secretary general of the United Nations, and presidents worldwide. After that human rights organizations filed official complaints on the grounds that Roach's execution would violate international law and human rights charters across the globe. Nevertheless, Roach was executed without the intervention of the governor or the president.

Though many states in America have outlawed capital punishment for juvenile offenders, several states continue to sentence juveniles to death. In many ways this is due to the greatly fluctuating number of arrests of juveniles for potentially capital crimes, such as murder and drug dealing. The arrest rate for juveniles for intentional homicide has increased 90% from 1986 to 2000. The rise in such crimes has also made juveniles police force targets. In reaction to this rise in murder, many states over the years have reinstated the death penalty. Politicians use it as a key issue on the campaign trail. The American idea of being tough on crime is directly connected to capital punishment and if juveniles are committing those crimes, they become subject to such a punishment. America's general argument for a juvenile death penalty is directly linked to this. Harsher punishments for criminals is accepted as key to correcting the social conditions which breed violent crime, in this case juvenile oriented, in the first place.

Like the Death Penalty in general though, capital punishment is not a deterrent to



crime. In fact some statistics would link a rise to crime in nations that have death penalties and a drop in those that abolish it, for instance Canada. The harsh punishment of on violent juvenile offenders is only a temporary solution instead of working towards long term solutions that affect the lives of children like schooling, poverty, and societal structures. And when those juveniles that are being targeted are of color (which overwhelmingly they are) in the American South, no consideration has been given to what really causes crime or how to make some positive change in urban/poor communities where these kids are coming from.

When jobs go farther are farther away from working poor neighborhoods during the continuing white flight and city expansion here in the South, the problems grow from there. In the Southern inner city you find convenience stores instead of groceries... prisons instead of libraries... old schools instead of new ones... thus limited options, desperation, and isolation (all contributors to crime). Most of the crime in this country isn't coming from the urban ghettos that the white middle and upper class are so afraid of. Instead it's white collar crime, the same crimes that are effecting poor people who sleep in their poorly built yet highly funded housing and work their below living wage jobs. A focus on harsh punishment in fact seems to be the linking factor between America and other countries enforcing a juvenile death penalty. The execution of minors seems in particularly cruel considering the lack of consideration of the inability of a youngster to age and grow out of situations that are usually terrible. Until the United States makes long term solutions a priority, capital punishment will continue to exist and juveniles will be subject to it.

To end all this I just want to say something positive... seems sometimes my columns get overwhelmed in negativity. I'm really excited about this new year, really happy to leave 2002 (which was so hard for me) behind. Hopefully we'll all make the most of it... I know I'm gonna fucking try. Thanks to all my friends for being there and thanks to punk for changing my life!

Love: Jonathan Lee/PO Box 3678 /  
Memphis, TN 38173-0678;  
Diyememphis@aol.com

PS: I'm also extremely excited about the new hardcore band I'm doing called Dead City. If you're at all interested we have a demo tape out now... 20 plus minutes... send a few bucks to my PO Box and it's yours. No use trying to describe it, it's not that kind of band, not to mention that would just be down right boring.

PPS: Looks like the Yaphet Kotto/ Seein' Red split LP will see the light of day this March... watch the fuck out (fingers crossed)! It'll be on my new label So Much To Give and it will be a part of the Education Reform Series... 4 split LPs then a double CD to benefit a Memphis school district that ranks one of the lowest in the United States. More info soon...

#### Last Minute Addition:

After I wrote my column and turned it in, something extremely wonderful and unexpected happened. In a political climate so pro capital punishment, the governor of Illinois granting clemency to all of the state's death row

inmates on Saturday January 11<sup>th</sup>. That's more than 150 people reduced to sentences of life in prison without parole. Three others have been reduced to smaller sentences and may see release on parole. This seemed to me surprising considering Gov. George Ryan is a Republican, but it was his final act as governor (his term ended that following Monday).

In an investigation of the Illinois state capital punishment system, examiners found over 13 prisoners on death row were innocent. It was this study and the release of a wrongfully accused man just 48 hours before his execution that changed the once pro death penalty governor's mind. Similarly, the day before Ryan's death row releases, he pardoned four men convicted of convicted of fatal stabbings in 1984. The confessions that put the four men in jail were tortured out of them by Chicago police all those years ago.

Illinois still has death penalty laws though and future convictions will occur. 38 states have reinstated the death penalty along with the federal government who have been ready to use it since the 9/11 aftermath. Since 1976 when capital punishment was reinstated there have been over 820 U.S. executions, 71 of them last year (2002). There are nearly 3,700 men and women still under the death sentence in the United States. The fight is far from over, but for the first time in years there is some positive momentum. In the wake of all this other states have recently called investigations of their own into their state's capital punishment system.

"How many more cases of wrongful convictions have to occur before we can all agree that this system in Illinois is broken?" —ex Gov. George Ryan



I missed the deadline for the "punk over thirty" issue, and I have no regrets about this. Being punk over thirty ain't shit—try being punk over forty (Hi, Ingo!). Try being punk over fifty: Joe Strummer couldn't manage it. The *Chicago Tribune*, reporting on his death a couple of days before Christmas, spells it out: Joe

Strummer, founding member of the Clash, "the greatest" and "most creative punk rock band," is dead at fifty. This is a deserved eulogy, but you have to wonder, what did Joe Strummer eat on a typical day for lunch? Was he a heavy smoker? Did he sleep on the floor a lot? And if a person of his stature can't make it, physically, past fifty, what is the life expectancy of the ramen-noodle-eating mid-thirties punks with no health insurance? Thirty-six?

Plans are underway to induct the Clash into the Cleveland, OH-based Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame (hot tip: when in Cleveland, admission to the Hall of Fame is free if you're in a band, just bring a CD). The Ramones, none of whom seem like they are going to make it past fifty-five, have already been inducted. A friend of mine

was invited to the induction ceremony. "What do you wear to an event like that?" he wondered aloud, days before. "Formal attire? A leather jacket and bowl-cut?" What would the surviving Ramones be wearing? Leather jacket and bowl-cut would seem the punk thing to do. But when you're being inducted into a hall of fame on account of your famous feats of punkness, has the point already been made bluntly enough? Is it time to just accept your iconic lot, put on a tuxedo, and start shaking people's hands?

"Punk's not dead, it just deserves to die," sang Jello Biafra, in 1986. But that was a figurative death: punk is now dying, actually, here on the mortal plane—the people who came up with it are passing away, and while we, here on this side of the mortality fence, can choose to adopt the lifestyle known as "punk," we can never be "punk" in the same authorial way that Joe Strummer or Joey Ramone were. "Perhaps dedicated individuals still speak of the genuine, real thing," writes George Petros, "but in fact they choose a lifestyle demographic, just like jazz or blues or metal.... or sports or movies. It just keeps on going on; if ya dig it, it's cool." *If ya dig it, it's cool?* That's not exactly as compelling as *the only band that matters*.

A DJ friend of mine, known for spinning whole sets of Clash songs, expresses minor devastation at the news of Strummer's passing. "It's a tragedy," she says. I do my best to console her. "What are you sad about, exactly?" I ask. "You didn't know him personally. You still have the records. Do you think his greatest contributions to humanity were yet to come?" It seems to me that as lives go, Strummer's was a good one. He was a "success," "the greatest, most creative" punk rocker of his time. It says so in the *Tribune*, and thus becomes historical truth, microfiched and archived for later junior high-school research paper usage.

Billy Bragg, quoted for the *Tribune* story, says, "Without the Clash, the political edge of punk would have been severely dulled." But the paper hastens to point out that "despite uncompromising political principles, the Clash were commercially successful by punk standards." Uncompromising political principles and commercial success are not antithetical according to "punk standards," apparently. That sort of thinking is the stoic ideological domain of hardcore, which recognizes that when Bragg talks about "political edge" he's talking about triple LPs dedicated to Nicaraguan revolutionary movements, not what-are-you-going-to-buy-at-the-grocery-store politics. It was the innovation of hardcore to take things that step further, to be so uncompromising as to call out even the most supposedly radical cultural expressions of the time as self-indulgent, fake and morally compromised. Crass mocked the Clash as major-label sell-outs, capitalizing on revolutionary rhetoric; the Dead Kennedys parodied the song "I Fought the Law," putting the modified chorus ("I *am* the law, so I win") in the mouth of Harvey Milk's assassin. From the vantage point of hardcore, punk rock was still just rock, and thus as bankrupt as anything else.

But, fuck, man, it's undeniable—the Clash were great. Listen to "Career Opportunities," "Safe European Home," or "London Calling." Even Combat Rock is better



than any record you'll ever make. Hardcore was oedipal, self-consuming—in its rejection of everything it left little room for anything. That's the nature of iconoclasm: it's a destructive force by definition, and when there are no more idols to be smashed there is nothing left to wreck but yourself. Biafra wasn't talking about punk when he said that it deserved to die, he was talking about hardcore. That was the "stale cartoon" which punk had become by 1986, and it keeled over, seemingly on demand of its principal architect, just as he was grimacing publicly at what he had invoked the kids to do.

1986! I remember it, actually, but it was a long time ago. I'm certainly not thrilled to think that I'm involved in atavistic pursuits, just as the caretaker of a turn-of-the-century letter press doesn't want to hear about how great laser printers are, but there are certain realities which must be faced by even the most creative anachronists among us. I'm not sure punk deserves to die, but Joe Strummer will attest that this does seem to be the forensic reality of the situation. We can gnash our teeth in nostalgic grief or we can spit on his grave, and like the tuxedo vs. the bowl-cut, it's hard to say which action would be the punker of the two. Strummer, at least, can rest in peace, knowing that what he created will live on, at least in some *Chicago Tribune*-digestible format. As for Biafra, who upped the ante for another generation of angry kids, and who made me, for one, interested in politics and playing in a band—if he was that disillusioned in 1986, I'd hate to hear what he has to say about his lawsuit-riddled legacy now. If punk was just rock, and hardcore demanded more, that only makes the failure more profound. "If the music's gotten boring, it's because of the people who want everything to sound the same," sang Biafra in 1986, and that's you, punks under 30, choosing your lifestyle demographic, your thing that "if ya dig it, it's cool," finding connectedness and comfort in something which was created in the spirit of divisiveness and discomfort. Punk wasn't enough for the people who came up with hardcore; why is hardcore enough for you?

#### Nate Wilson



Do Or Die!

Confession time here folks... since my fellow columnist in these here pages, Matt "hail the new dawn" Average decided to reveal parts of my past, I figured I better come clean to the young folks out there.

I grew up a metal head. I grew up listening to early thrash metal such as Slayer, Merciful Fate, Exodus, Manowar, and many more. This was around 1983 in Albany, New York. My brother, who was a few years younger than me (and a bit more into the academic side of things), started listening to early punk, like the Circle Jerks, Black Flag, Suicidals, DKs, and all that other early crap. I found the music he was listening to, to be as hard hitting, and as powerful as the Satan worshipping shit that I was listening to. I became so impressed that I decided to go to my first punk show (this was a scary thing to do back then). The show was Black Flag, this was

in 1983 I believe. The show changed my life forever. I was in awe after seeing a bunch of short haired, normal looking punks jumping around, thrashing, and just going crazy at this show. These kids would pick each other up when falling down in the pit. This was something that never happened at metal shows. I knew then that I belonged around these people. I then started to branch out, and search through fanzines that I would buy at gigs to find other stuff that I hadn't heard. It was in these 'zines that I discovered bands like DRI, COC, The Freeze, Discharge, Jerrys Kids, Minor Threat, Youth Brigade, Agnostic Front, Antidote, Bad Brains, FU'S, MDC, etc. I had discovered the true underground. Of course we didn't have the Internet back then, so things were not as accessible as they are today.

I was still sporting my long curly locks, a leather jacket, and a bit of my lame metal attitude. I was obsessed with getting as fucked up as possible, drinking, smoking, huffing glue, taking acid, snorting speed, what ever I could get my hands on. The scene back then was typically very violent, and drugs and alcohol played an important part in all that. There wasn't a show that happened in the early '80s that I attended, that didn't have at least a fight or two. I went to shows alone, because my metal pals were starting to make very little sense to me. When I would go to these shows, and hang out alone, people would spit at me, I'd get my hair pulled, get my head walked on by stage divers, and worst of all get singled out by the skinheads. For some odd reason I kept going to shows. I realize now, looking back that I was a sort of freak, and so were the punks that I was sharing my show experiences with. Back then long hair, an upside down cross, and a leather jacket were frowned upon not only by society, but by punks also. You could easily get jumped and beaten up for sporting a Mohawk, wearing spikes, etc., by "normals." Things certainly weren't as accepted as they are today at malls everywhere, in every state. We were all freaks back then.

After a few years of boredom, and trying to fit in here in Albany, I decided to move to the Mecca, San Francisco, California. It was now late 1984 early '85, and the metal and hardcore scenes we're both booming out there. The Farm in S.F. was putting on great shows to around 600-1000 kids a weekend. My first show at the Farm was Septic Death, Christ on Parade, Beyond Possession, The Drunk Injuns, and JFA. It was a skate rock benefit show for *Thrasher* magazine. I saw so many great shows there—bands like Raw Power, BGK, Possessed, Bad Brains, Clown Alley, The Adolescents, RKL, Discharge, DRI, Poison Idea, Youth of Today, Justice League, Death Angel, Victims Family, Dayglo Abortions, False Prophets, Doggy Style, and many more.

The shows were so diverse out there, and eventually I found other metalheads that were crossing over and becoming more open-minded. We we're changing, from homophobic, closed minded idiots to open minded, political punks. Shit, I was actually going to shows at a fucking farm, a place where live animals lived in the middle of the city. I found myself going to rallies, protesting for homeless rights, eating at soup kitchens, etc. My views were changing, and I was educating myself, not from school, but from

the people, and the music I was involving myself in. I finally had found my niche in life, the punk scene. Problem was I still got harassed for wearing my hair long.

I met a guy at the Farm, he was older then I was, his name was Mark. He had long hair also but wasn't a metalhead. We discovered that we lived down the street from one another. He started taping me all this great stuff that I hadn't been exposed to (mainly European, and Japanese stuff). Mark took me to some meetings for a new venue some punks at *Maximum Rock 'n' Roll* were trying to set up. We all sat around on the floor, and listened to, and discussed this space that was going to bring on some of the first elements of true DIY into our punk rock scene. It was a venue, run by punks, for punks. I don't think it had really happened anywhere else before. Gilman Street would help to keep bands from getting ripped off by cheesy promoters, and would add a feeling of "we've been able to do something ourselves." This is what I got out of listening during these meetings anyway. I can remember Tim Yo not giving me much of a chance because I still looked pretty metal. I remember the guys from Sacrilege, Corrupted Morals, Isocracy, and Op Ivy being at these meetings also. I met a lot of very cool people at those meetings, but generally I wasn't accepted or trusted by the majority of the punks at Gilman Street, or *Maximum Rock 'n' Roll*. The funny thing is, I really wanted to be a part of Gilman Street. I had helped to build the stage, I was trying to talk Tim into letting me be involved with the sound (as I was going to a sound recording school at the time). Tim just couldn't get past my appearance I guess. After a while I became disgusted with how I was being treated. I stopped going to the meetings, because they seemed elitist, and dictated. Tim started arguments with me, telling me that my kind (the metal kind) were destroying and infiltrating the DIY scene.

I did continue to go to the shows there anyway, but decided to blow off the meetings. I sat through so many Op Ivy, Crimpshrine, Stikky, Isocracy shows that it made me sick. I stopped going around '88-'89 for a couple of reasons. I saw the Feederz play there, and was a bit bummed out to watch Tim and other MRR people stand and laugh as the vocalist of the band came out with a dead German shepherd draped on his shoulders, and a dead cat hanging from a guitar. They then tossed the dead dog into the pit, and the idiots in the audience proceeded to throw the dead dog around, as they danced. I was completely appalled by this. I decided to leave the show, but not until I confronted Tim and his group of friends who were so amused by the event. Tim told me to relax and that the dog and cat were bought at the Humane Society, used to shock the audience. I stopped going to shows at Gilman until a show that I couldn't resist happened—by this time I had shaved my head, and traded in my Marlboro's in for X's. The show was ridiculous, it was like Freewill, Against The Wall, Unit Pride, No For An Answer, and Tim and company decided as a joke to throw The Dwarves on in the middle of this silliness (someone had a great sense of humor). After a few straightedge bands played to a bunch of mostly idiotic jocks, The Dwarves took the stage. They lasted maybe a few minutes. The singer pulled down his pants and proceeded to jack off, and yell to the audience something



about smoking pot, and drinking beer. They were chased off stage by the militant straightedgers, and almost beaten to a pulp. To this day I'm not sure how they got their equipment out of the place. Again Tim Yo sat in the back area of Gilman laughing like a mad man with his friends.

I guess that where all this is going, is that now I've become the old man who's bitter and jaded (like Tim seemed to be to me) and yes, I'd rather hang in the back of a venue joking with friends, making fun of, and judging the long sets that mostly bad bands play... I don't think that anything can really offend me in punk rock anymore. I look back and realize how silly it was for me to have a problem with what the Feederz did at that Gilman show. It was done purely out of reaction. People were trying to get people like me pissed, and it worked. The funny thing is, is if that sort of thing happened today, I think people would try to kill Frank Discussion (or at least banish him from "the scene"). Then again this was a scary man... a man who at that very show had live cockroaches glued to the top of his head. Punk rock!

On an unrelated note, I'm wondering how long it took for Matt to come up with that 10 band list in his last column (prolly days of scratching at that big 'ol head of his)? The East coast is where it's at brotha. Join us. Bring the family, too. Here's my East Coast list (it took 4 minutes, and could easily be added to Mr. Average)—Dropdead, Cut the Shit, The Rites, Guyana Punchline, Balance of Terror, Last in Line, Bones Brigade, The Prowl, Straight to Hell, Bucket Full of Teeth, Gatecrashers, Think I Care, Out Cold, Cops and Robbers. We win Matt... sorry. PS: Get a job!

I can be reached at  
cryptocomx@aol.com. Thanx, Nate.

## Criss Crass

### "But We Don't Have Leaders"—Leadership Development and Anti-Authoritarian Organizing

Leadership and leadership development can play important roles in moving forward with our commitment to equality in organizations, movements and society. Leadership development, as defined by organizer Dara Silverman, is working with others to build skills, analysis and confidence. Anti-authoritarian organizing, as it relates to this essay, is building the capacity of people and their organizations to challenge illegitimate authority—which includes capitalism, white supremacy, patriarchy, heterosexism and the state. Anti-authoritarian organizing, like other forms of radical organizing, uses principles of solidarity, cooperation and participatory democracy to build movements for social change. Anti-authoritarian organizing over the past century has helped to advance a politics that challenges the idea that the ends justify the means. The emphasis on empowerment, democratic participation and transparent decision making are based in the strategy that our organizing prefigures the society we're working to build. Anti-authoritarians generally argue that revolution is a process made through day-to-day struggle rather than one historic moment.

The concept of leadership is complicated and the struggle for a more complex understanding of leadership is on-going. Movement veteran Elizabeth 'Betita' Martinez says, "As organizers, we need to reject the definition of leadership as domination, but without denying the existence and need for leadership. Denial can lead to a failure to demand accountability from our leaders. That demand must be embraced, along with anti-authoritarian methods, in leadership development. Accountability takes the measure of a person's responsibility; it means being accountable to one's fellow organizers, to the goals of one's collectivity and ultimately to the people one claims to serve."

In thinking about leadership development several questions have guided me: How can leadership development help us build mass-based, multiracial, anti-racist, feminist, anti-capitalist movements with visible leadership from women, queers, transgendered people and working class people of all colors? How can we talk about leadership without creating the image of two or three people leading us, but the millions of people, in their communities, who are right now leading progressive social change around the world? And, as a white male from a middle class background, what does an anti-racist, feminist, class conscious leadership development process look like for people of a similar background working for collective liberation? In writing this essay I look to those who have mentored me in thinking about leadership development and the models of respectful leadership they've provided: people like Sharon Martinas, Dara Silverman, Clare Bayard, David Rojas, Betita Martinez and Laura Close.

In arguing against the commonly held opinion that revolution was both spontaneous and right around the corner, 19<sup>th</sup> century Italian revolutionary Errico Malatesta said, "It must be admitted that we anarchists, in outlining what we would like the future society to be, have, in general, made everything look a bit too easy." We have a critique of existing society and a vision for the future, but no plan to move forward, he said. He went on to say that we must meet people where they're at, win concrete improvements in people's lives through collective action and, together, expand both our desire and capacity for liberation. Leadership development is about expanding that capacity and recognizing that social change doesn't just happen, it is made. It's about the long, slow, patient process of building power with people rather than power over people. **FOOD NOT BOMBS AND THE STRUGGLE OVER LEADERSHIP**

It was in the winter of '94 and the protest was at the Hall of Justice. Food Not Bombs activists were being arrested repeatedly for sharing free food at the Civic Center across from city hall. Keith McHenry, a longtime FNB organizer was going to court, facing felonies, and over 100 people protested to drop all charges and end police harassment of low/no-income people. I had just moved to San Francisco and wanted to get involved. I'd been doing FNB in Whittier, a suburb of Los Angeles, but I didn't know any of the SF people. The long line of police in riot gear was intimidating. I tried to introduce myself to some folks, but people were caught up in the moment. I stood by myself trying to figure out

what was going on, wearing my FNB button, hoping someone would talk to me.

Someone did talk to me—Keith McHenry. He was thanking people for coming out and introducing himself to people. When I said I had been doing FNB for the past two years, he immediately started introducing me to other FNBers and invited me back to his house for dinner. He asked me question after question about how I got involved and what we did in Whittier. He gave me literature, told me about the meetings and asked me what I was interested in doing. He told great stories and had a healthy laugh. Over the next year he would call me and ask if I could help him with all kinds of projects.

McHenry did an excellent job of bringing me in. I wanted to join, but he opened the door and welcomed me into the group. He didn't just tell me what needed to be done, he asked me questions and wanted to know what I was all about. He asked me what I was interested in and followed up with me. He mentored me in direct action organizing, and I was heavily involved in FNB for the next six years.

Keith is a good organizer but there was also dynamics around privilege in effect. Keith is a white man from a middle class background who connected with a younger white man from a middle class background. This is more than demographics; it's about the way we were both socialized to behave and interact. Our connecting and working together wasn't problematic in and of itself. The problem was the ways that white men of class privilege dominated the leadership positions in Food Not Bombs and how our ostensible rejection of even having leaders prevented meaningful discussion about sharing power, challenging privilege and supporting leadership development of a broader base of people. For example, it was not uncommon between 1995-98 to have organizing committees of five men and one woman, all white and of mixed class backgrounds. And while the general meetings were also majority men, women made up half of those who did the work.

In FNB, the concept of leadership was fiercely debated. For years, many of us said, "there are no leaders." Often times people like myself who were playing obvious leadership roles were the ones most vehement about the group "not having leaders." Our refusal of leadership was, in many ways, an attempt to share power, but it also made it extremely difficult to talk about the real power dynamics in our work and how they related to institutional forms of privilege and oppression. If we have no leaders, it was argued, then anyone can participate just as much as anyone else. If we believe in power sharing and collective organizing, then work in the group is generated by personal initiative driven by a neutral "do it yourself" ethic. Power dynamics in the group were frequently discussed as personality conflicts and attributed to the shortcomings of individuals. As Malatesta warned, we had a critique of inequality and a vision of equality, but no plan to get from here to there.

When we talked about why the same people did all the work there was rarely concrete steps put forward about how to change the situation. But there was often anger from all sides about the situation. Those doing lots of the work would say they needed help and asked why people



weren't participating. Those making lots of decisions would often say they wanted more people to be involved that they didn't want to have all this power. They often felt guilty and defensive about the situation. Those who were marginalized in the group talked about how others were monopolizing power and that things needed to change. Inequalities and their negative consequences continued to hurt individuals and undermine the group's efforts.

For 23-years, FNB groups have been an important point of entry for thousands of people coming into movements for liberation around the world. FNB—like other groups that are gateways into social change work such as MEChA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan), gay straight alliances, anti-corporate student groups, Earth First! and others—create opportunities for people to learn, practice and develop skills, analysis and confidence. While working for justice in society, these groups can also help people understand the connection between personal and social transformation.

Leadership development is primarily about doing day to day work—door knocking, political education, recruitment, cooking for 100 people at a rally—and having a space to reflect and learn from the experience. Making leadership development a more formal and intentional process, for me, has been about taking responsibility for my actions and trying to be accountable to the people I work with. In rejecting leadership, I was in many ways rejecting responsibility and accountability to others and continuing the tradition of capitalist individualism. In learning to respect the leadership of others and in myself, I have struggled to reclaim trust in and respect for myself, both of which I was taught to achieve only through dominating others. In working to heal myself and fight back, I have needed the leadership of others who have nurtured and developed communities of resistance and cultures of liberation.

#### **DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP AND BUILDING ORGANIZATION**

In Food Not Bombs, the most successful ways I saw change happen was when we began to identify positions of leadership in the group and had open discussions of power and strategized ways to share it. This was an ideological shift from "no leaders" to "working to all be leaders." We already had rotating facilitators at our weekly meetings and someone who served as the treasurer. People began to identify other responsibilities in the group: writing up literature, developing and sending press releases, representing the group in coalitions and so on. But the same people generally stayed doing the work. We had begun to identify leadership, but we didn't have a leadership development process.

An important piece of leadership development is recognizing the skills and analysis people already have and providing each other encouragement and opportunities to develop further. It's helpful to look at the many ways that leadership manifests—strategic, tactical, theoretical, programmatic or operational, to name a few—and then break those down into tasks and concrete steps people can take. Through practice and accomplishing concrete projects we become more confident in our abilities.

One step to take is identifying the many things that need to get done in an organization and having coordinators delegate work. There should be things new people as well as people who have been around can take on. This doesn't mean just announcing tasks at a meeting, but asking people to do certain things. If it's something like facilitating a meeting for the first time, speaking to the media, performing before a large number of people, or confronting the mayor, this requires giving the person extra encouragement and being there to offer support. Asking people how the experience was for them and opening up space for evaluation of experience is a big part of leadership development.

In my experience, directly asking someone if they would do something is far more effective than asking in a meeting—effective not only in getting more people doing more work to build the collective power of the organization to fight for justice, but also in terms of promoting the leadership of a broader base of people. I volunteered to do so many things in FNB meetings, wishing other people would, resenting other people and knowing people resented me for the position I was in. Anti-authoritarian leadership development is about looking at our organizations, looking at how power operates and taking small but concrete steps to share power. Another rule of organizing is that when people take on work, they should be given props. Recognizing the work people put in, not just the highly visible roles or the people who speak and write, is crucial for movement building.

Leadership development is about seeing different levels of responsibility as stepping stones to help people get concrete things done, to build their involvement, to increase their sense of what they are capable of and to develop the skills necessary for the job. Leadership development is far more than just rotating work. It is based on the belief that analysis, strategic planning and critical consciousness develop through action and reflection. Without space for reflection—"What did you learn from that experience?" "What was good and what could have been better about that protest?" "What could you have done differently?"—our abilities to plan and organize can remain stagnate. In FNB we were generally more reactive than proactive, and long-term planning meant thinking two months down the line. In rejecting leadership we also undermined our ability to plan and be strategic.

Leadership development is also about encouragement, recognizing that people frequently carry enormous insecurities about being good enough, having enough experience, having anything worth while to say and doubting that anyone thinks they're capable enough. Simply saying, "Hey you should go to the next organizing meeting" can be a form of leadership development. It's a reminder that the meeting is happening and indicates that you want that person's involvement. Asking someone face-to-face is the best way to get them to go somewhere or do something because you can provide encouragement if they say, "no, I don't have enough experience" or "but, I haven't been in the group long enough." Working through our own and others' insecurities and fears is a huge part of organizing.

SF FNB's largest event, our 20th

anniversary free festival Soupstock that turned out over 15,000 people, was a majority women organizing crew that coordinated over 300 volunteers. The first majority-women meetings were the result of women and men asking people to attend, then answering questions about involvement and trying to get folks excited about the project. But it wasn't just that suddenly more women were asked to participate and there was feminist transformation. Rather it was the result of a decade of work by women like Johnna Bossuot, Alice Nuccio, Julia Golden, Tai Miller, Lynn Harrington, Catherine Marsh, Rahula Janowski, Loretta Carbone, Lauren Rosa and Clare Bayard who organized Women's Autonomous Cookhouses, distributed feminist literature, put on anti-sexism workshops and initiated a women's discussion group to support each other's leadership. In SF FNB, becoming more conscious of whose leadership was supported and how it was supported, and how race, class and gender privileges operate, helped lay the foundation for change.

A consciously radical leadership development process needs to have a strong anti-oppression analysis of race, class, gender, sexuality, ability and age. Who already feels entitled to volunteer for responsibilities? Who already has certain skills and resources? Whose participation goes unrecognized? I've been in countless FNB meetings where men, mostly white, would come for the first time and talk like they knew it all and volunteer for high levels of responsibility that many other people who had been in the group for years had never taken on. I've also talked with dozens of people who were in groups for long periods of time and said they didn't take on responsibility because "other people would be able to do a better job" or "I didn't think other people would think I was capable enough."

An anti-oppression analysis is key to leadership development. The majority of leadership in liberation struggles comes from people of color, working class and low-income people, Jewish people, transgendered people, queers and women. Leadership development for me has been working to challenge the ways that race, class and gender privilege have been obstacles to seeing and learning from this leadership in oppressed communities. A leadership development process for people with race, class and/or gender privilege that has a focus on learning from leadership in oppressed communities is critical to successful movement building.

Looking to leadership in oppressed communities is recognizing that those most negatively impacted by oppression hold keys to dismantling those systems. It has meant looking for that leadership and listening harder, knowing my socialization trains me to ignore those voices. It's not about agreeing uncritically with everything but engaging respectfully because leadership from oppressed communities has been the heart of liberation struggle and is key to my own liberation. It's also about being complex, knowing there's a vast diversity of voices in oppressed communities and knowing that looking to leadership is about liberation struggle not guilt and that I must make political choices and be accountable for those choices. What it comes down to for me is believing that systemic



inequality and injustice is built on the backs of oppressed communities and that radical leadership from those communities is core to radical struggle to free us all. My training as a white, middle class, mostly heterosexual male was to only see people who looked like me as leaders. In rejecting leadership I was revolting against that training. Later, it became clear that leadership from oppressed peoples was key to my own struggle against internalized white supremacy, patriarchy, heterosexism and capitalism. In universalizing my understanding of leadership as loyalty to oppression, I was marginalizing leadership for liberation both in oppressed communities and in myself. Anti-authoritarian leadership development grounded in anti-oppression politics is about critically looking at how power, privilege and oppression operate and taking concrete steps to build our movements and move us towards collective liberation.

*Respect to the editorial crew on this essay: Rachel Luft, Dan Berger, Vivian Sanati, Elizabeth Martinez, Kerry Levenberg, Dara Silverman, Gabriel Sayegh, Clare Bayard and Chris Dixon*

Highly recommended: Clare Bayard's recently produced 'zine *Danger Third Rail Is Electric* is one of the most powerful explorations of gender, sex, sexuality, patriarchy, the gender binary system, heterosexism, identity and desire that I've ever read. In voicing and sharing her experiences, reflections and analysis about the process of negotiating gender and identity as someone who is both a survivor and gender queer, Bayard opens up space to heal, grow and fight back against systems of oppression that subjugate and deform desire. This 'zine is a critical contribution in the struggle to destroy the grip of patriarchy on our hearts and minds. The personal struggles explored in this 'zine are courageously written about so that they may aid us in our own struggles to understand liberatory desire and identity rooted in self-determination and anti-oppression practice. You can write to Clare at [catalyst@riseup.net](mailto:catalyst@riseup.net) to order the 'zine.



*Top Ten List of "Punk" "Visual Artists" Whose Work I Dig Right Now: Art Chantry, Sam McPheeters, Andy Mueller, Anthony Decanini, Marcel from Coalition, Tae Won Yu, Jay Ryan, Winston Smith, Jacob Bannon, Rick Fork*

It's hard to imagine Chicago as a romantic city. Sure, a walk along the Lakeside with the far stretching skyline sprinkling in the

background could be pleasant experience with a significant other. That is, if you take out the Superfan guzzling Old Style, gobbling a Vienna sausage like fellatio was going out of style, and saluting the now quiet Wrigley Field with a belch and a nod.

That's the Chicago most outsiders know and love—a blue collar city with little glamour and class. Spoiled by mob history, the natives' attitudes remain "Bull"-ishly stubborn on the fact that public flatulence is acceptable (I'm really talking about the hot air from the politicians that herald the moniker "The Windy City"). Its idea of "charm" is a naively ignorant Yugoslavian immigrant named Balki Bartokamus.

Awww, look at him go nuts at McDonald's!

A recent houseguest equated Chicago's hipster-friendly-by-gentrification Wicker Park neighborhood to that of Williamsburg in Brooklyn—except that "the people in Chicago are a not as pretentious or pseudo-fashionable. They're actually, in fact, quite ugly." And this was *before* he saw a picture of Shellac.

He added that if we're so repulsive, how does the dating scene go? Do Chicagoans have the dignity to not defile the gene pool with Billy Corgan's bald creepiness? We all know dating isn't always the superficial game exhibited by the quality reality television that fills my head after 9pm on one of those network channels.

This explains a lot of things: 1) Why every boy in Chicago is in a band, 2) the abundance of ridiculously cheap beer (not that proximity to Milwaukee has anything to do with this), and 3) one could be bundled in an enormously large parka with a knit cap over their face and still be hit on at a bar.

I moved to Chicago because I needed a change in my life. New experiences were rare in my native North Carolinian college town cluster. With change in environment comes change in habits, especially dating. Gone are the days of small town acquaintance and it's now time for big city anonymity. Dating could just be as random as throwing darts, that is, if you're me and drunk on tequila and wielding sharp objects. So, in time for the Valentine's Day festivities (a holiday created so the Romans could build their army, no lie! But that's a story for another day), here's something about significant others and all that bullshit.

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**BABY, NOT TO BE MEAN, BUT YOUR SWEET NOTHINGS KIND OF MAKE ME WANT TO PUKE.**

I was patronizing a Starbucks in Old Town while waiting for visiting family members for dinner. While I was sipping my sad scalding excuse for tea and scribbling seething sonnets in my sketchbook (hey, I was trying to blend in), I heard a man approach a woman sitting at the table behind me.

The woman looked about in her mid-20s. She was certainly attractive, but unfortunately dressed in some outfit she plucked off a buffalo at Wet Seal. Supplemental "Seinfeld-esque" discussion question #1: What is the deal with popular women's fashion these days with rawhide cowskin with silly wool linings? I mean, Pocahontas certainly had a diggin' jam goin on in that eponymous movie (it was a period piece,

right?), but seriously, stringy leather tassels belong on bondage whips, not jackets. Southwestern wear be damned! But I digress... she was sitting alone, reading a magazine, looking peaceful.

The wooer was a little more subdued with his outfit, covering everything with a gray trenchcoat. I think he had pants, I'm not sure. He was balding and at the age where it's expected to be a porn-addict. I'm not quite sure if he was a businessman. Supplemental "Seinfeld-esque" discussion question #2: Only businessmen and frustrated angst-ridden teenagers in Doc Martens think it's fashionable to wear trenchcoats. They're classy, but intimidatingly masculine. He lacked the small-dicked confidence of a normal businessman, so let's say he's just plain sketchy.

"Is anyone sitting here?"

"Uh, there's empty tables all around us." She's right, I counted three empty tables and one recliner free of other vermin. He scans the scene but remains oblivious to the subtle hint that he's not wanted.

"I know, I'm just waiting for someone."

"Oh, all right." He sits down and pulls out a *Tribune* to scan over. Super Sketchy Trenchcoat Man leans over and attempts to engage in conversation.

"So, this Starbucks is a lot nicer than the other Starbucks." Yes! Go monoculture!

"Ummm, yes. It is."

"That's a pretty picture on the cover of that magazine."

"Yes, it is."

"Excuse me, are you Rachel?"

"Uh, no."

"OK, I'm supposed to meet a Rachel here." Sounds like someone met someone *on the Internet*. He gets up and strolls around the store. After he walks away from the vicinity a second predator immediately plops down on the chair.

He looked like Neuman from the aforementioned hit sitcom. That is, if Neuman had severe acne with scars that ripped deep troughs through his face like the Grand Canyon. Neuman helps himself to a seat.

"Hi. Is anyone sitting here?" She looks up and nods towards Sketchy Dude in Trenchcoat.

"Yeah, that guy is, but he's waiting for someone."

"Oh OK. I noticed you from over there and you were sitting alone and I thought to myself, 'Wow, she looks like she could use some company.' So I told myself that I should come over here because I could probably *help* you." He inhales and exhales deeply. My jaw drops and I smack my cheeks with both hands, because I am way impressed with his brashness.

"No thanks, I don't need any help."

Sir Sketchy Trenchcoat returns from running laps around the coffeshop. The two suitors immediately cross paths, but shun away from each other as if they accidentally walked into the same private peepshow booth—falling into the wrong place at the wrong time. It was a total Frasier moment.

Both redhanded and redfaced, the dominant male overtakes while Neuman shuns from the scene with his tail tucked in between his legs. He disappears into an engulfing couch with other balding men content with reading about The Bears' dismally disappointing season. Mister Sketchy Trenchcoat No Pants regains his position



under Juliet's balcony. The woman scowls,

"You know, there's plenty of other tables to sit at. Besides, I'm waiting for someone."

"Oh, I know. But I think I'm just going to sit here." He grumbles a sigh and violently opens his newspaper. Before the introductions or even the prenuptial agreements, he's already in full form for a spat! Assuming this is the end of the entertainment, my eavesdropping ear tunes towards my own preoccupations, which all of a sudden seemed so trivial to the pathetic after-work special that had unfolded in front of me. I was disgusted and filled with contempt, but *intrigued!* I want my E! Entertainment!

A few awkward moments pass but were soon stifled by more awkward questions. At least he's forgiving. He throws great classics like, "So what's your name?", "What are you doing tonight?", and the once-meaningful-but-now-kitsch smash hit, "What's your sign?" Every charming line was met with silence, in which it might be safe to assume that she was ignoring him. This goes on and I'm getting pretty irritated. Not irritated at his creepiness, for that provided the sort of contemptful humor I thrive on (it's catty, I know, now shut up and go talk about how big your record collection is), but annoyed at the fact that this guy wasn't getting the hint. It was like watching a small bird continuously pounding itself against a glass pane, thinking, "If I hit it at this angle with this much velocity, I might be able to surpass this invisible tree!"

Like Courtney Love into Nirvana's post-humous life, I got all up in his business. I turned my head towards him and fired off, "Yo Mister, can't you see she's not going to talk to you?" I'm sure I used the term "Dude," but that never comes across well on paper.

Their necks crane at the rude intrusion of a third party. They're both speechless with confusion, I think. Thrust into the spotlight, I mumble an explanation. "I'm not bagging on you for trying, but it's really hard to hear you persist without gaining any ground. I mean, if you're going to hit on this woman, at least try and say something thought provoking so it's worth her time." Don't make eye contact with the girl. Don't make eye contact with the girl. If you make eye contact, you'll freak out and lose your steam. Oh look, she's smiling. Fuck! In pure sensitive male glory, my confidence goes flaccid and my poker face rears a look of fear.

He huffs and adjusts his collar with a single hooked finger that might look appropriate on a nerve-wracked insurance peddler. I imagine the grime and sweat that just gathered on his digits and wondered what I'd do if he dipped that finger in my tea. "Well, then, wiseguy. If you think you know your way around a woman, what would you say?"

Two thoughts: 1) *around* a woman? What is this? A bad yo moma joke with me running laps around yo moma? OH SNAP NO YOU DIDN'T. And 2) Goddamn it. I thought I'd be let off easier than this. I scanned my brain for easy copouts that weren't "Listening to people ramble on gives me a rash" because I already used that one to flake on one of my friends who wanted to see Race Traitor.

My eyes darted around the situation and honed in on a conversation topic: her reading material. Luckily, it wasn't something alien like

*Wine Spectator* or *Donkey Punching With Donald Duck* but the once familiar sight of *Adbusters*. Wait. *Adbusters*? I can imagine Kalle Lasn pounding his head on his Mies van der Rohe footstool in defeated frustration or victoriously pumping his fist in the air and exclaiming "Hark! Yet another subversive victory! Now here is some 100% post-consumer confetti made out of Jonathan Barnbrook's rejected layouts shredded by well-compensated migrant workers from Winnipeg! Can I get a press release?" It's kind of funny that both situations are in reality's grasp.

"Don't you think it's a little ironic that you're reading an *Adbusters* in a Starbucks?" I chastized. For we all know with young people that irony is hip, but not edgy like ironic irony where, in these post-post-modernist times it's kind of cool but not really sort of. She smirks and nods towards my logo-emblazoned tea, "Well, I didn't buy anything here."

We engage in conversation, at a level a little higher than small talk. We're joking around and I learn that she's waiting for a friend to see *Bowling for Columbine* at the theatre next door. I tell her it's a great movie, since I had seen it two weeks before.

Mr. Sketch in the Trenchcoat stands up stiffly and puts on his hat.

"Well, it sounds like you have a good conversation going on. I'm going to leave you two and find somewhere else where people aren't so *nosey*." He shoots me a biting glare at me and departs. Not before he violently tosses his paper into the garbage. I think to myself, "Field goal! Two points!" and return to a discussion on how boldy blind that guy was. She (let's call her Katie) insisted on calling him a creep, but that's really giving him too much credit.

Katie's friend eventually shows up and I return to the action in front of me (folding paper footballs!). As they prepare to leave, she taps me on the shoulder.

"Hey, I know you've seen the movie, but if you're not doing anything and want to come along, you should."

Alex, I'll take Brilliant Faux Pas for \$200, please: I decline.

Alex, I'll take Brilliant Faux Pas for \$400, please: "I'm actually waiting for my Mom."

Alex, I'll take Brilliant Faux Pas for \$800, please: Me grinning stupidly through an unbearably awkward pause.

Her toe begins to tap and I catch my cue, "Uh, is this the part where I, like, ask for your number or something?"

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## BLOWING YOUR LOAD ON THE FIRST DATE WITHOUT EVEN SEXING IT UP

It seems like a legitimate number (not 867-5309), so I prepare to cruise onto Level 2: Playing the Phone Game. When I say cruise, you know I mean *cruise* like Don Johnson in a convertible and white blazer. I get a few minutes of Miami sun when my cockiness comes to a screeching halt.

It finally occurred to me: I had never been on a date before in my life. I'm in my 20s, comfortably self-sufficient, and finally figured out what to do with that thing down there, but the idea of a "date" was still intimidating. Sure, I've gone out with people, namely friends, but those seemed less formal than the situation I was now

placed in. There's a huge emphasis on the word "date" rather than "hanging out."

I know very little about this person and without a context, I'm blind as to what the expectations are. All of a sudden, all the bullshit I've read in "Of course I read it just for the hoots and hollers!" *Maxim* and *Seventeen* seemed relevant. There are now *rules* I need to follow. Rules fixated by editorial columnists who get a "dating expert" salary.

My crisis equates that of a young adult sitcom, a letter in the aforementioned magazines, or slightly above the dilemmas in the popular board game *Girltalk*. I frantically call friends, asking questions I should have had answered by reading the high school boy's locker room wall. How many days should I wait before I call? What should I suggest we do? Should I show up in my Boy Scouts uniform with flowers and candy?

My friends were an invaluable resource: "Do whatever you feel comfortable with, dude." Okay, point heeded, but that's for people who don't play by the rules. A surprising amount do, and I plan to perpetuate that. One so-called expert friend offered her two dollars by breaking it down:

"You want to call her no earlier than two days because you don't want to seem so eager, but don't let that go past a Thursday because then it'll be too late and think you're a slacker who doesn't have any plans or other social engagements. You want to look like you're fitting her into your schedule and make her feel special but definitely don't call her on Monday, Tuesday, especially not Tuesday because you don't want to interrupt *Buffy*, but early in the week is bad because then it'll seem like you're literally fitting her into your schedule. If you do call her, make it in the early evening because you don't want to get her at work or when she's out socializing, especially if she gave you a cell phone number, so I'd narrow it down to Wednesday at 8pm if you're going for a Friday date or Thursday at the same time if you're going for a Saturday date." I called Katie on Wednesday and got a Sunday date.

A friend was in a similar position and once wrote out a sample conversation before the date. The outline was so detailed that it dictated what he would say and then her reply. As he ran the idea across his roommate asked, "So what if she doesn't say whatever you put down in line 2b?" That's when he pulled out the Backup Conversation, which was of similar nature, but with different topics and words. Obviously, this didn't pan out, so for the second date (yes, surprisingly, they had one and then dated for months), she brought a list of questions to ask when there was a lull in the conversation—of which there were many.

I practiced saying my r's and outlined a loose itinerary. I've heard there's nothing worse than showing up for a date without any plans. I wanted to have a lot of "me" in there, but a moderate amount. Extreme interests were nixed, and some of you absolutists out there are probably crying foul for watering down myself in order to achieve a compromise. A good first impression seems necessary to feel out a situation. I'd rather ease into the idea of listening Poison Idea rather than hit her over the head with a picture of Pig Destroyer and saying, "LOOK AT WHAT I'M INTO!"



The first date panned out like this: we met at an artsy café for dinner, chased by tea at my favorite coffeeshop, saw Doug Martsch play an acoustic set (which I had scored free tickets for. Shhh! It's not being cheap, it's *brilliantly economical*), and then hit up a nearby pub for nightcap drinks. It offered ample conversation time while providing a lot of "outs" in the case I completely repulse her with stories about "tussing up in the playground when I was 22.

The date is a success. The conversation never died, no discomfort from either party, and Doug Martsch didn't indulge in a twenty minute instrumental jam. With a kiss on the cheek, we make plans for subsequent ones.

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## WHEN I SAY XXX HARDCORE, I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT PORNOGRAPHY

Throughout my life, I've dated namely friends, fellow college students, or people involved with "the scene" (the latter with often horrendous results... so much for common interest!)—all without any sense of pretense. The familiar direction provided an angle to work with, or at least a sense of comfortability. I guess I could be considered a "young professional," and it would make sense that I date other "young professionals," but it never struck me as meeting someone after work and having them show up in their business suit.

Katie turns out to be incredibly interesting. She's quite a few years older than I am, with a lot more experience under her belt in all facets of life. She works at an art gallery, wheeling and dealing with collectors who have more money than Tony Brummel. Katie's an artist herself, with an MFA from a prestigious art school. Art schools already warrant a level of skepticism, but I'll place an exception on graduate students. They all seem to have their heads on straight and have gotten over trying to be as *avant garde* as possible. Grad students generally think about art as a real medium, not a vehicle for eccentric angst and despair, but I digress.

We eventually get around to talk about subculture and my involvement with punk as more than just the music itself. This corny conversation is always awkward, as the critiquing eye usually belonged to a scornful relative or an ignoramus bent on playing the devil's advocate. With any attempt I've made, I've ended up feeling silly that I would care so much about any particular record. Why are there so many subgenres? What are 'zines? Why the hell would a kid invest hundreds of dollars to put out a release by a band that's completely unknown? I've learned that it's a deeply personal experience and—while my peers can understand—outsiders see it as borderline cultish. Or, as the devil's advocate prickily notes, "So, you're kind of like hippies, but with distortion."

Katie nods in agreement. "Yeah, I totally know what you mean. I used to be part of all that as well." My eyes light up. "I used to go to raves all the time." My eyes widen with fear. This would explain why she's wearing a bright red shirt with an anime character chillin' on it. A post-raver? I wanted to ask about glowsticks and glitter pacifiers, but then she added, "this was back in the days where they held them in abandoned warehouses. Before it got filled with morons in glowsticks and glitter pacifiers" Ahh, this is

interesting. I demand more elaboration, which she can't completely fulfill because of the drug-induced haze that surrounded that period of her life. She does remember a sense of community and an expectancy of ethos that went along with the subculture, which could be drawn as a parallel to our underground DIY scene.

A friend of mine once asked why the scene was so incestuous. She suggested, "Why don't you go find yourself a marine biologist or someone cool like that?" and she's right. I guess I had a pretty myopic view, keeping my window open at particular bars and at indie rock shows. It turns out that Katie and I hardly have anything in common, but why does that matter? In fact, it helps us lead our lives on our own terms and exposing each other to whole new worlds. If nothing, I'll know a hell of a lot more about post-raver artists than I ever would.

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A couple of recent and very awesome conversations I've had with my Dad lately.

Dad (upon hearing a bit on NPR): Do you know this guy Steve Albini?

Me: No, not personally. I know who he is.

Dad: Doesn't he live in Chicago?

Me: Yeah, I think his studio is somewhere in the northwest side of town.

Dad: Have you ever been there?

Me: No, I have nothing to do with recording.

Dad: But he's punk and you're punk.

Me: That doesn't mean we hang out!

Dad: Well, you should. He seems like a very interesting guy.

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Dad had just made tea, by taking the actual tea leaves and sprinkling them in water, so that there are all these little bits of... stuff in hot water.

Dad: Here's some tea I made for you.

Me: Uh, that's not how you make tea. You can't drink that!

Dad: Oh. It's the old fashioned Chinese way.

Me: No. That's the wrong way.

Dad: The Chinese are never wrong.

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If you feel inclined, but don't make the same expectation for me: [vincent@pacihl.com](mailto:vincent@pacihl.com).

Frank Sapelfeldt



*Legal Affairs, Computers and the Hammer that should smash them both:*

I have to apologize for this column. Anyone who reads my column could come to expect some stories from my job. I had written a very detailed account of my New Years eve night at work. I held off sending in my

column because I knew I would have crazy stories to write down. But on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2002 I experienced the most insane night at work. I came in to work a 16-hour shift and was involved in some very crazy and hectic situations. The problem came about the next day when all the news programs picked up some of the stories. So I can not write about my night because at least 4

of my calls that night are under investigation for one reason or another. The investigations have nothing to actually do with me besides that I may have to go to court to testify, but because they are open investigations I can not comment on them just yet. Because of this my column is cut down to a dismal size and without any whimsical stories of the life and times of East New York/Brownsville. I am sorry about this and believe me when I tell you that I have so much to say about this night it will be in a future column as soon as I can safely write it down.

The second problem that came into play was the computer virus I got that made it near impossible to even write this. For days now I have been repairing my computer to some semblance on working order just so I could get something in. I had to piece together this column between my computer and Morgan's computer. So thank you for reading and thank you Leslie and Lisa for being so patient with me. I promise the next column I write will have everything about New Years Eve the names and places will be changed to protect the innocent but it will be written.

*I wonder how effective I have been. Have I had an impact? Do you think of me at night? YES*

"I see dead people..." That was the problem I was having for some time now. I would close my eyes at night and I would have horrible nightmares. At first I didn't want to admit that I was having problems. I always thought an admission of weakness would forever damage me. So I pushed on through all the sleepless nights and night terrors. In the past year I have seen so much death and destruction that it finds its way back to me when I close my eyes. I would have dreams of mixed points in my life that would always end in Manhattan and then buildings exploding, planes attacking or the one that bothers me to think about people melting like "Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark" style melting.

It is hard to explain sometimes exactly what it is I went through and what I am going through with what I have seen and what I will see tomorrow. My job is a love/hate job... I love to hate it and the hate is what keeps me safe. But when I actually get to do my job the way it is supposed to be done there is no greater reward or job to have for those few minutes. But in this little column I let out my anger, my fear and my hurt. So for anyone who reads my column and thinks I am a miserable prick who does nothing with his time but whine and complain about my job... well I am a prick but there is more to me than my job.

I could complain about a million things that happen on a day to day basis and how terrible it is in the area I work, but the fact of the matter is that I chose this line of work. I didn't expect to endure some of the things I have, but those are the breaks and I have to heal and get past them. For the most part I still really can't totally deal with the aftermath of September 11<sup>th</sup>, and the death of my partner Andre. I think these 2 events had a massive indelible impact on my life. When the nightmares started I would just forget about them and move on, they then progressed into sheer terror during the night with racing heart and sweats. Eventually this lead up to what some would call insomnia, although it was never



diagnosed—I just wasn't sleeping. As my nightmares got worse it seemed like where I work was becoming more violent lending me more horrible images to work with. I would see the faces of the people who I tried to save attacking me in my sleep. I was being haunted by death.

I started telling people that I was having trouble sleeping and I found that if I talked about work with people that it helped me out too. No one person can deal with the stuff I see all day, it affects everything in your life and sometimes you need to step back and take a break. Right now as I write this I am almost at the end of various vacation days. I have for the most part been off for a month, with the exception of a 16 hour night New Years Eve into New Years Day. I started my vacation with some well-needed sleep. Then came a few days of basically doing nothing but palming around with friends. December 14<sup>th</sup>, I took my promotion test for Fire Fighter. After many postponements it was here and I am happy to say that I did wonderful on the written portion of the test. The physical will be given sometime in the summer.

*For those I love I will sacrifice:*

As soon as I finished my test I went home to get ready for a short East Coast tour with my friends' band Most Precious Blood. I was excited to be on vacation, away from work and more importantly I was going to be with my friends. So off we drove, heading out to Washington D.C. I miss being on the road. I miss the friendly teasing, the off the wall conversations and the little jokes that stay with you throughout the trip. I was not sure how this trip was going to be because most of the time I have spent on tour was with my own band Murdock playing in basements and houses. On this trip we were going to be playing a mixture of House, Hall and Club shows. So we start off making jokes about how Tim has lost his identity and how Sean always seems to smell like Turnips. Eric laughs like a goat and loves to fart. Matt is from the South so we just tease about translating redneck (Wang-dang-diddy-doe). Tom gets teased for always being on the phone with his girlfriend back at home and Justin gets teased for his infatuation with Pitbulls. Myself, I was getting teased for various things—most of the time for my lack of hair. Rachel, who plays guitar, wasn't coming along on this trip but she drove down to D.C. just to play this one show and to drop off some new shirts she had screened, so she got teased once we got to the club. I love this sort of thing, just driving and hanging out. Matt is videotaping the whole trip and the laughs are just non-stop. We had to take a break to get some gas and use the bathroom so we invaded a truck stop for the individual needs. When we came out Eric and Matt were being attacked by a flock of birds. Matt had been trying to videotape the birds when Eric thought it would be a good idea to give them some bread. It was a scene out of a comic strip.

We arrive at the club and this place is huge.. During one of the bands a kid jumps off the stage nails his head on the ground and starts seizing and posturing, a bad sign of head trauma. The club had some medical equipment because they have some people trained in first aid. So we initiated care, stabilizing his head and giving him some oxygen, soon after the D.C. Fire Department was there and they were super nice to me. While

some of the crew worked on the kid the others showed off their truck to me. The club sung my praises and gave us all anything we wanted. I took them up on many a Redbull. All in all the show was good and it was a great start to my vacation.

The second and third night were in West Virginia we met Joe and Dana, two awesome kids that were refreshing to meet because of there true love for hardcore/punk music. When you live in NYC to me it seems like a lot of people take for granted what they have and the ease in which you can find it. Out in the sticks of West Virginia it's a big deal to have a band come through town. We got to the show and played some football with Joe and some of the other people at the hall. We had a great time; we also bought some cap guns and had play gun fights. Joe just bent over backwards to make us feel at home, and it did my heart well to know that there are random kids in other states that love this music as much as I do. Don't give me the fashion or the newest sloganeering just give me some fucking rock and love for what you are doing.

After two long freezing cold days in West Virginia we had a long ride to Virginia Beach. I kept thinking to myself on our 9-hour drive that the person who booked this tour does not own a map. Our friends in Virginia Beach set up a rad show. Curtis, DJ, Paul, Dave and Adam play in a band called The Takeover. They are just straight up hardcore and they are really good at it. This show was also my first contact with Christian Hardcore. I always hear about it but I never had to see it in front of me. This has to be the stupidest faction of hardcore that I have ever seen. I have to say that Norma Jean, the band that all the Christian kids were there to see, were really nice kids, and I wouldn't say anything against them as people... But come on. People had "JC/HC" shirts on—Jesus Christ Hardcore shirts. So we had to keep asking them to play Deicide cover songs. I won't really get into why I feel religion should not be involved in hardcore but I might be a hypocrite for actually owning Shelter records.

Another band that was playing that night was a band called Sworn Enemy. These guys give off the tough guy vibe and they are a very tough band but those dudes were so much fun to hang out with. Sworn Enemy has a song about the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>. When the singer Sal talked before the song I was happy that someone had actually dedicated a song to the people who died that day. Midway through the song one guitarist said, "tear this fucking building down," I thought I was going to go nuts. I couldn't get past it so when they finished I ran over to them to talk to them. I explained to them my feelings about what had just happened, and I was met with one of the most positive and wonderful discussions on the subject. They agreed to change certain things that they do while playing along with being more open to hearing what people say. So if you ever see them, talk to Sal or Mike. You would think they would pull a gun on you but in truth they are just really great people willing to talk with anyone. Sal and Mike also took copies of the last 4 issues of *HeartattaCk* from me.

We slept at Dave from The Takeover's house we stayed up listening to records and playing video games and pool before we all passed

out. I woke up to what I thought was another terrorist attack. What Dave had neglected to tell us is that he lives right next to a Naval base. I was shaken awake by the sounds of jet fighters. The last time I had heard a jet fighter fly over my head was while I stood on the rubble of the World Trade Center. What a way to start your day... Off we go to North Carolina.

We got to the show and again we see droves of Christian kids. Now we know that Norma Jean needs to borrow a bass amp so Matt paints "Think... Don't Pray" down his bass cabinet. Very soon after Norma Jean asks to borrow our amp we agree and tell them that we will set it up for them. Needless to say the band and all the "JC/HC" kids were very surprised that night. One thing that I can't figure out... Norma Jean plays really chaotic music that the "JC/HC" kids mosh hard for... So does that mean "JC" is okay with violence? I don't know!!? Sworn Enemy is playing again tonight. Sal started the set off by talking about what I had said to them the night before and how talking and hearing new ideas was what he loved about hardcore. He thanked me for giving him a new point of view to think about and I was happy that I met someone that I wouldn't normally get to meet and I made a difference in his world, a miniscule one at that but one that was worth mentioning. My highlight of this show was Darkest Hour from Virginia that play Metal ala At the Gates and they are so much fun to be around and hang out with. They were a great live band and I can't wait to see them again in Florida. I had met some of the guys when Murdock had played in Virginia and again when the drummer was playing with City of Caterpillar and when the singer was on tour with Majority Rule. These guys will really have you rocking out and feeling good watching them have a great time playing.

Our plan this night was to drive to Atlanta and stay at Matt's parents' house then drive to Gainesville, Florida. We hit a bit of a snag about 2 hours into our drive—a tractor trailer flips over causing a huge traffic build up, and while we sit idling the van just dies. We push it to the side of the road as the sky just opens up with monsoon rains. We tried to restart the van to no avail and soon we were towed off the highway and to a local repair shop that wouldn't open till 8am. So most of us crashed in the van, a few of the guys walked down the road to get some food. After a long, cold, and damp stay in a van the repair shop opened and diagnosed us with a blown fuel pump. A few hours and a couple hundred dollars later we were on a high-speed race to get to Gainesville, Florida on time. We drove straight through, only stopping twice for gas and made it to the show about 20 minutes before we were due to play. The Gainesville Fest it is rather packed but overall I just got a strange vibe from it. To me it was like people from all over came to this show to walk the runway and be scenesters. More people were busy doing hipster stuff then to watch the bands play. The best thing about this day was seeing Darkest Hour play and hanging out with Ezra, Kevin, Jawk and the other kids from Atlanta. Atlanta is more then just were the "playas" play, it's where the hardcore kid's rule. Everyone that I meet from Atlanta is friendly and really true to this lifestyle without all the fashion and stupid crap.



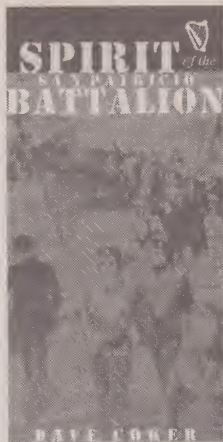
We drove to Atlanta and ate breakfast at the Miller Residence. This is Matt's family, they have a beautiful house and they just treated us like we were all their kids. We had a great couple of hours visiting with Matt's family. We were going to be leaving Matt here to stay with his friends and family for the holidays and we would do the long drive home by ourselves. The Millers made sure we had snacks and drinks for the drive home. They also made us a huge pancake breakfast and let us all get showered and fresh.

The drive home was very long we all just talked about the trip and cracked jokes. I was happy to be where I was but I also wanted to get home and see my family and Morgan my girlfriend. I got home and Morgan was waiting for me I was so happy to see her. My parents had put up all the Christmas decorations. My dog and cat were waiting at the door for me. I just felt wonderful; Christmas time isn't a religious time for me, it's a family time. Here I was coming home from a trip with a group of people that are like family to me to the open arms of my real family. I couldn't think of a better way to spend my vacation, and now I was home with more time to spend enjoying the people that love me. The first night home from tour and I slept like a baby. No terrors and no bad dreams, I guess I just needed to get back to myself. Every time I am troubled or down something about or related to hardcore brings me back and grounds me, or humbles me. Thank you to Sean, Justin, Matt, Tom, Eric, and Tim for the laughs and the good times. You are just some of the people that make "for those I love I will sacrifice" real and worth screaming. *If I stay here I will win:*

"Shadows dance in a faded room. Tattered flags will fly, and a rhythmic pulse will tap my tune. I am here. This time, this place. I am here. We can talk destruction. We can talk of salvation. We deal in charity when it suits us. We deal in sarcasm for comfort. Flashing blues half tainted with a frown makes me smile in the fact that I am a mystery. I am the shadow you all wish you could be. I am happy, I am dancing. I am FREE!!!"

This vacation has done wonders for me. I have been sleeping great and I have not had any nightmares. I go back to my regular shift tomorrow night I guess that will be the true test. I hope that my problems were passing problems and not ones that will stay with me. I believe in my heart that all I needed was a break, a chance to do something other than work. So my new years resolution was to do this a few times a year now. I am going to go on vacation a few times a year just to get away. If it's with Morgan or my friends I am just going to make sure work if the furthest thing from my mind and treat myself to a wonderful time. I love this life and I plan to do what I can with it. You are only as old as you feel and hardcore keeps me feeling like I am thirteen years old. Feel alive with high fives and stage dives. I am going to "stay young until I die."

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"LOVE IS STRONGER THAN DEATH..."FOR THOSE I LOVE I WILL SACRIFICE"  
09-11-01 BOX 55-8087 never forget our 343 brothers. We will not leave you behind.



the building. Strange and unnatural smells filled the air, supermarket style lighting beat down into your brain, a wall of sound every bit as brutal (but not nearly as cool) as Slayer washed over you. It was a multilateral assault on every sense with the end result being an overwhelming urge to run screaming from the building. This was all compounded by the fact that for every hour I worked the evil fucking temp agency which had hired me, Manpower, was receiving five dollars of my wages. Had I been hired directly by the plant I would have made eleven dollars an hour. Of course, the six bucks an hour I was making at the time was the highest wage I had ever earned at that point but it didn't take a genius to realize that eleven is more than six. The blatant unfairness of the whole set up never ceased to outrage or amaze me.

While I was working at SonoPress I met a member of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) or Wobblies as they're commonly known. I was forever talking about how awful my job was, how much I hated the security guards, and how much I despised the monotony of the assembly line. When I woke in the morning the first thought to plague my mind was the realization that I would have to go to work. When I slipped off to sleep at night the last thought to dance across my consciousness was the impending doom of punching the clock the following day. Naturally, I was more than ready for some kind of radical expression beyond what punk rock and the DIY scene had to offer. Although I wasn't able to articulate it then I longed for something that would address the realities of working life, jobs, education, housing, etc. My friend in the IWW began to give me literature and talk about unionism drawing from the experiences I had shared with him about my job. Growing up in a humble rural setting had left me with a kind of elementary populism which grew out of the witnessing the mutual aid that existed, and still exists, in poor Appalachian communities. My family and the people around us didn't have much but what we did have we shared in common. In my high school Economics, Government, and Law class I found more good sense in the biased definitions of socialism than all of my text book's chapter's on the superiority of the free market economy. Without the big words or history to back me up I simply felt people should have what they needed to live.

It was easy to take the step from the simple and natural inclinations I held to the IWW's goal of a worker controlled economy

based on the needs of people which, of course, is an elementary concept of Marxism. The road to the collective ownership of the means of production laid out by the IWW appealed to me. There was no reliance on the ballot box only the strength workers exercised at the point of production. In other words, workers would build power on the job through education, and direct action tactics until, eventually, the majority of the working class was organized into the IWW. From there the three point program of education, organization, and emancipation got a little hazy beyond the call for a General Strike to appropriate the means of production. Despite the shortcomings of the IWW vision after the Great Day I felt as if I had, for the first time in my life, found something that spoke directly to my situation and position in the world. The critiques of capitalism within IWW literature, both classic and contemporary, spoke to a gut level feelings I held my entire life. On a day to day organizational level the IWW set forth a clear plan of action in the vehicle of revolutionary industrial unionism. A system was set up by which every job that existed or could be created would be placed in an industrial union where its function in society most complimented the running of industry. The history of the IWW was also insightful and inspirational. With the mantra of "we are all leaders," the rank and file of the IWW filled jails during the free speech fights in the northwest, walked countless picket lines throughout the world, and endured lengthy prison sentences in opposition to World War I. The IWW had also been founded in part as a response to the racist and xenophobic policies of the American Federation of Labor's (AFL) brand of craft unionism. Whereas the AFL was content to organize only domestic born, male, white, so-called skilled laborers, the IWW recognized, even if only in strictly pragmatic terms, the absolute need to organize the multi-national, multi-racial, "unskilled" workforce. The AFL was, for the most part, content with its relationship with capital and held no desire to make the needed steps to build a fighting organization that would pose a serious challenge to the ruling class.

The IWW I had joined though was not the same organization I read about. The numbers had diminished dramatically with the IWW almost disappearing into the history pages sometime in the 1980s. During my membership the IWW hit the mark of one thousand members worldwide and it was a great cause for celebration. Perhaps the best way to deal with all the contradictions I saw is to say the character of the IWW had changed. It was no longer a fighting, international, multi-racial, working class organization. It really wasn't even a functioning union. In all honesty, it seemed as if the membership consisted mostly of college students, intellectuals, and patch punks drifting from place to place and fetishizing being on the bum. The majority of the membership was organized into General Membership Branches (GMB.) These GMBs simply consisted of at least ten IWW members in one geographical location. The GMBs had no industrial base and most times functioned more like cells of a political party than a union. It seemed as if there was very little industrial organizing going on (Just a note on the term "industrial" as it is used here—while I'm aware in conjures images of beefy white dudes



with hard hats and overalls filing into gigantic factories, the way it is used by the IWW is to describe all types of jobs and how they are organized along industrial lines. For instance, the Restaurant and Hotel Workers belong to Industrial Union 640, Sex Workers belong to Industrial Union 690, and so on. Any job currently existing or which could be created fits into an Industrial Union depending on where its place in industry is. It's kind of like the Dewey Decimal system of labor.

In all fairness to the IWW, as it exists today its ranks are filled with some dedicated and sincere people. They currently put out a pretty decent paper, *The Industrial Worker*, the literature department carries some great books, and individual Wobblies the world over agitate in their respective workplaces for better conditions. The IWW model of organizing is also better suited to smaller workplaces than anything the AFL-CIO could offer at this point.

My beef really lies in one major feature of the IWW's ideology which I think is at the root of its contemporary irrelevancy and generally illustrates a point about today's Left—and perhaps even more particularly punk kids currently functioning in the Left. That feature is the idea of dual-unionism. This concept of dual-unionism simply puts forth that the existing union structures are now, and forever will be, incapable of recognizing the historic mission of working people to overthrow capitalism and institute a system based on the needs of people rather than profit. Dual-unionism also puts forth the notion that current labor unions are corrupt, bankrupt, top-down, and impotent organizations which don't possess even the slightest hope of ever turning into fighting organizations. Now, certainly there is a bit of truth in the criticisms of union structures that exist today. They're not always democratic, there are methods of organizing in place which fail to empower the rank and file in many cases, and corruption is not a thing of the past. At the same time, to abandon all hope of these unions ever turning around is not only historically short-sighted but a pretty easy position to function from. In their place the dual-unionists propose a "pure" union based on revolutionary principles and action. While there is no formal rule that Wobblies leave their more reactionary counterparts, the IWW, with its dual-unionist policies, effectively promoted the militant sectors of the mainstream unions to pull out altogether if not to become so much dead weight hindering their advance.

Consider the following quote from William Z. Foster's *American Trade Unionism*: "During the great movement of the packinghouse workers of 1917-21 the indifference of the radicals towards the old unions wrought particular havoc. A handful of rebels, free from dual union ideas, were primarily responsible for the historic movement. Soon they found themselves and the middle group in a finish fight with the conservatives for control of the newly formed unions. Occupying the strategic position in the organizations, especially in the Chicago stockyards, they begged the dualistic radicals, who worked in the industry, to come in and help them control the unions, offering to place them in secretary-ships and other important posts. Had this offer been accepted, it would have certainly

resulted in the big packinghouse unions, then numbering over 200,000 members, coming entirely under progressive leadership. But so strong was the spirit of dualism at the time, in 1919, that the outstanding left-wingers would not participate constructively in the trade unions even under such exceptionally favorable circumstances. They refused the invitation with insults and contempt. The consequence was that a few militants within the old unions were swamped by the reactionaries, who soon wrecked the whole organization by their incompetence and corruptions."

Foster left the IWW around 1911 in order to form the Syndicalist League of North America (SNLA) an organization that put forth many of the same tactics and goals of the IWW but with one key difference. The SNLA vehemently opposed dual-unionism and laid out a plan that called for militant workers to remain in the existing and reactionary trade union structures. It is a fact that when the Left elements of the labor movement vacated the old unions, rather than mounting campaigns against racist practices, fighting for internal democracy, or pushing the leadership to organize, there was a vacuum formed which was filled by and large by reactionary leadership.

Considering the fact there are roughly only 16 million union members in the US (which is around 12% of the workforce) and only a thousand or so folks who are members of an organization that actively promotes dual-unionism, this may seem like so much pointless intellectualism. On the contrary, the point is that it is much easier to work from a position that is "pure" or absolutely "revolutionary" when there is little to no contact with those outside their social or, worse yet, ideological ghetto. The IWW, despite its heroic struggles of the past and the great contributions it made to working class culture and action, may have, in fact, hindered the class struggle in the United States more than it helped it. Had all the energy, passion, discipline, and tenacity of the IWW rank and file gone into dismantling the old and tired union hierarchy who knows where the labor movement would be today. Of course, it's all a matter of speculation but the bottom line remains; progressives, radicals, revolutionaries—whatever term you might prefer for yourself—must bring their ideas home. They must bring their ideas to the masses of people in a way that is not condescending or self righteous. And more importantly, they must listen to where people are objectively—not where they want them to be.

\*\*\*\*\*

If any of this garbage interested you and you'd like to find out what the deal-o is then I'd suggest the following resources: *Rebel Voices*, *An IWW Anthology*, edited by Joyce Kornbluh, is a good starting point to get a comprehensive history of the IWW in its own words. You can also check out the IWW newspaper, *The Industrial Worker*, by sending a buck to PO Box 13476/Philadelphia PA 19101. *Syndicalism* by William Z. Foster and Earl Ford is a pretty quick read and can be obtained from the Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company. Kerr is the oldest publisher of socialist literature in the US and carry some great stuff. You could probably get a catalogue if you send them a nice letter to PO Box 914/Chicago, IL 60626. And last, but certainly not least, I'd

recommend "*Left-Wing*" *Communism, An Infantile Disorder* by the one, the only, VI Lenin to further explore the need for Lefties to be where the so-called regular folks are hangin'. Oh ya, Johnny Cash's new album, *When The Man Comes Around*, is all I listened to while writing this stupid thing. Word.

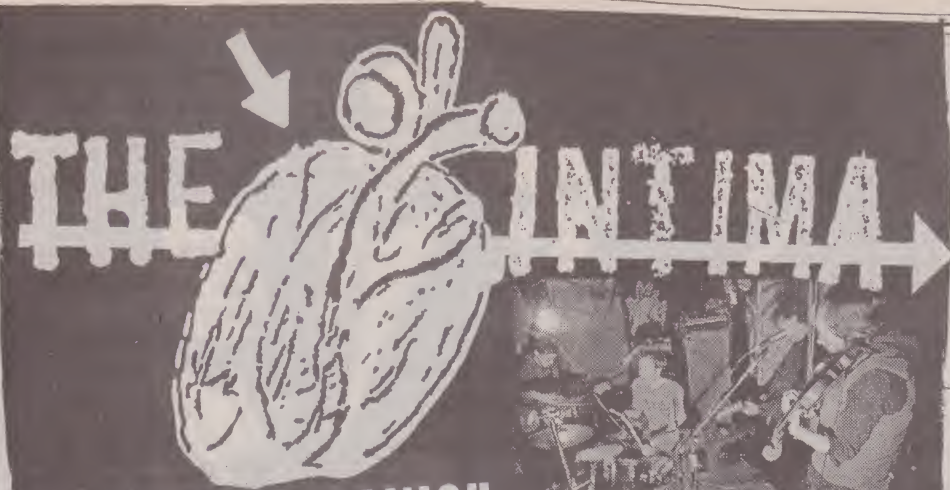
Okay, all you anarchists, Wobblies and anarcho-syndicalists out there with your red n' black flags, hoodies, face masks, (and trust funds) can let me have it at davecoker@slavemagazine.com or PO Box 10093/Greensboro, NC 27404.

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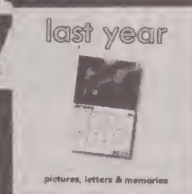


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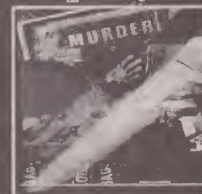
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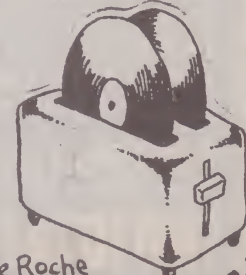
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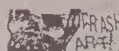
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model demonstration of how an anarchist society operates. Besides—if we can't make three, five, and eight person collectives work, how are we supposed to succeed in overthrowing capitalism and making a world where we *all* get along?

So without further hoopla: some of the various strains of band

music, without which there could be no band). He, of course, is only giving voice to the politics they already hold unconsciously—he is the Vanguard, and this gives him the important responsibilities of managing their labor, representing their interests, issuing statements on behalf of the group, etc.

Being able to express one's feelings in words, to speak one's mind publicly, to articulate complex ideas on the spot, all these are valuable skills to have—the problem is not that the singer exercises these, but that the way the band tends to function develops them in this one person and not in the others. The singer may well be saying and organizing things that need saying and organizing, and he or she may for that matter be the one who takes the most responsibility for important matters such as the relationship between the band and other people (thanking people who lend equipment, being



# The Punk Band as Anarchist Collective

*composed and illustrated by two graduates of the Catharsis collective*

to unleash as you discover what you're capable of together. That's when it works.

When it doesn't work, you'll lie awake plotting revenge on your closest friends, you'll marvel in terror that something supposed to be fun could be so much more agonizing than day labor was, you'll even think, in the bleakest moments, you've found the proof that the anarchist revolution is a pipe dream after all.

This is about that critical foundation for world revolution through d-beats, circle pits, and patches—getting along with your friends and bandmates. Without that, nothing is possible; with it, *anything* is.

It's distressing how many avowedly anarchist groups, who evangelize publicly in favor of non-hierarchical blah blah blah, are plagued by authoritarian and coercive internal dynamics. On the other hand, considering how much trouble even the best of us can have getting along with each other in relatively stress-free circumstances, it's really phenomenal how many punk bands, composed largely of emotionally disturbed young people suffering from mental illness, have all the same succeeded in working together long enough to record artistic masterpieces and even tour the globe repeatedly. Anyone who's tried either of these things knows how emotionally taxing they are—especially without any social support system or financial means to speak of.

The art of cooperating closely with a few comrades under pressure is probably the most important skill the hardcore punk milieu can foster. When they function, affinity groups such as the punk band are notoriously capable of achieving triumphs out of all proportion to their small size—and not just in the realm of rebellious music, either; additionally, they function as a scale

pathology, and how to treat them.

Specialized Roles, Ideological Centralization, and the Provisional Dictatorship of the Singer

One pattern especially seems to recur over and over in the case of the "political band": the singer versus everybody else. Who's to blame for this?

Division of labor means that every member becomes specialized in his or her instrument—and, often, in the accompanying role associated with that instrument. Bassist jokes! aside, the one most deeply affected by this is usually the singer. Already likely to be outgoing and expressive by temperament, the singer finds herself/himself in the role of using words and thoughts to represent the whole band. Lyrics and accompanying song explanations are expected of her/him, interviews tend to be directed at her/him, bandmates will count on her/him to introduce the songs while they fine-tune their instruments. All this serves to reinforce her/his inherent authoritative tendencies (let's not kid ourselves—we *all* have some), and soon being the spokesperson comes naturally.

The best analogy to use here is the Communist State—the singer has become The Party, whose White Man's Burden it is to educate the Masses, starting of course with the Proletariat of his own band: the other members, the ones who actually manufacture the useful product (the

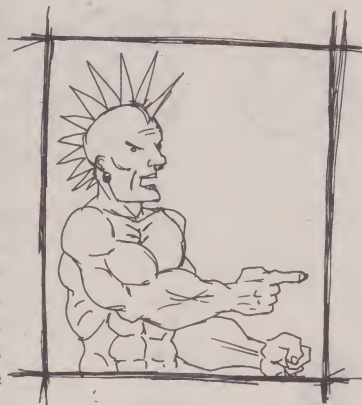
personable with hosts and other bands, etc.)—but this specialization is not usually sustainable, and never healthy. Tensions develop between the different class strata of the band, now that they have different interests according to their different roles. Seriously, how many bands have broken up because the dissensions between the singer and the rest of the musicians became unbearable?

In a worst case scenario, your Singer will metamorphose into a Dictator. Responsibility and responsibility alike tend to flow in one direction once a pattern is established. The more one person does, the more she or he knows how to do, and feels invested in these things getting done—and the less everyone else does. Worse,

that person can thus become unwilling to trust others with responsibilities, just as others cease to be aware of how much work there is to be done and what it takes to do it. The Dictator blames others for not taking on responsibilities they don't even know exist; the others blame the Dictator for hostility and resentment they lack the context to understand.

It's worth clarifying here that The Singer in question may not actually be the singer, strictly speaking, of the band—

it might be a guitarist, tambourine-player, even a bassist (!) playing this role. Hell, the actual vocalist of your band might be the most tight-lipped, antisocial, irresponsible person in the group. The phenomenon of The Singer is a social affliction that tends to take root in singers but can appear elsewhere (just as even in interactions between women, it can happen that one plays The





Man). An instrumental band might end up with a Singer, despite themselves—that's the danger of division of labor of any kind, even the most informal or accidental. For that matter, one member might play The Singer for some time, and then another member slide into the role.

So how do we protect ourselves against this cancer? There's the reformist approach: try to keep your Singer in check with continuous feedback, constantly apologize for the position of privilege and power you hold as Singer, etc. And then there's the radical approach—change the structure of the band unit itself: eliminate The Singer as a musical or organizational role, rotate the role from member to member, form bands in which everyone sings. Neither strategy can work without the other, really: no radical restructuring of band format could by itself undo the effects of the decades of hierarchical conditioning all of us have already undergone, and at the same time it's foolish to think people in structures that are conducive to specialization and centralization can behave differently just by deciding to.

### Harmony, Not Unity

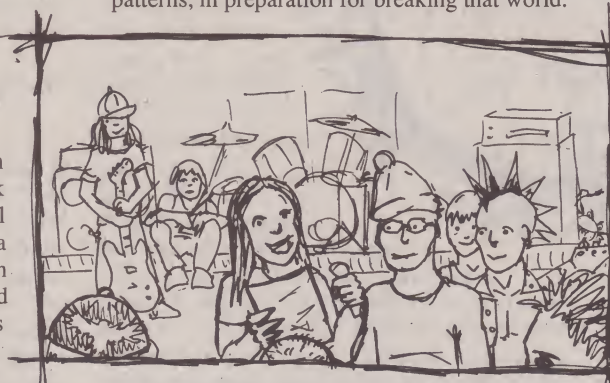
Many political punks approach band-forming with the idea that to work together, be (seen as) sincere, etc., all members of a political band must share a specific political platform, a certain lifestyle, and a strict code of conduct. And you thought the pressure to conform was bad in high school! Once again, "radical" ideologies that neglected to do away with hierarchy (such as Communism) have historically demanded such standardization from their ranks, and have ended up with consequently sterile movements, artwork, and societies; anarchist thinking, on the other hand, suggests that diversity is necessary to any healthy ecosystem or organization. Greater diversity gives you a wider range of inspiration and ideas to draw on, and makes for better music; and since human beings are *always* different, even when they try to homogenize themselves, any value system that encourages conformity can only spawn dishonest and superficial relationships and projects.

A collective of would-be clones can learn to do one thing well, at best; a circle of unique individuals can do many differing things that complement each other. The best bands are the ones who engage the sum total of all the different members have to offer, not the ones who limit themselves to what they have in common. Some of the really great moments in punk rock have come when bands that "should have" broken up over ideological and artistic differences stuck together long enough to make one more beautiful, eclectic masterpiece. Let your drummer bring in techno remixes, your bassist design matching costumes, your guitarist expound on the post-Marxist implications of improvisation, and see what happens—that Conflict record you admire for its seeming political and artistic single-mindedness has already been recorded.

Starting from diversity is as important as fostering it. Everyone is unique, of course, and it can happen that there is more divergence of personality, skills, and experience between two people of the same background than between

individuals from differing demographics—but that said, it sure can be a great thing for a band to include members of different genders, social classes, ethnicities, cultures. When people from such differing backgrounds learn to understand and respect each other's perspectives, complement each other's strengths and weaknesses, and form symbiotic relationships on the basis of their differences—that's revolution in action, even if it's just a handful at first.

Almost needless to say (in these pages, at least), bands composed of members proceeding from widely differing conditions of privilege will have to work extra hard on learning to interact as equals. Oppressive patterns—middle class people tending to take over the organizing, working class people to do the physical labor, men to make decisions in ways that exclude women, etc.—come with us into our bands from the hierarchical world that raised us; let's make these bands social laboratories in which we learn how to break these patterns, in preparation for breaking that world.



### Make Those Autonomous Zones Expandable!

Achieving supportive, non-hierarchical relations inside of your band is great, but it's not much use to the world unless it helps others do the same. Here we must address the role bands, even punk bands, play in the society of the spectacle.

Let us return to The Singer. Watching a band play, audience members tend to unconsciously identify themselves with the singer, the same way a spectator in a movie theater identifies with the hero on the screen, or a reader with the protagonist of a novel. This explains why so many people willingly shell out their hard-earned money for recordings of hip hop artists bragging about how much they earn from record sales—the listener identifies with the MC rather than as the victim of his money-making scheme, at least while the album is playing. This displacement of agency is at the root of the powerlessness of today's average Joe: the power to be creative is projected onto the successful novelist, the power to play sports onto the basketball star, the power to make history onto the politician.

The question for the anarchist musician is how to enable rather than disable listeners. That's tough, because what we're dealing with in the case of the punk band is a specialized, perhaps technically proficient, group creating what is essentially a spectacle, a "show." Keeping these shows small-scale, so the performers and spectators can interact as individuals rather than only as people playing those roles, is one solution; creating performances that demand or provoke

audience participation is another. Maintaining humility, and keeping your eyes on the prize of extending whatever powers you develop for yourself to everyone else, are essential. Ultimately our goal should be to make the punk community something like an extended open mic circle, in which everyone has a turn to receive attention for their creative efforts.

### Finances

Capitalism plays into the division between artist and audience, too, of course. A punk band trying to operate under capitalist conditions needs to have a clear analysis of the challenges they're up against, and which compromises they're willing to make, if they want to be anarchist in deed as well as word. That's why we punks have always tried to keep our record prices low and our door costs sliding-scale, and scorned the pursuit of mass popularity.

The aforementioned hip hop artists are not the only hip hop artists, of course; they're just the only ones who have time and other resources to focus on their art, since everyone else is too busy earning money to pay for food, housing, and—their records. We punks have developed an anti-consumerist, anti-rock-star ethic to ensure that a greater proportion of our numbers can engage in creative pursuits; but it's still expensive to buy, maintain, and transport conventional musical instruments, and that money has to come from somewhere.

Your band will need a collective fund to pay for this stuff. That fund will probably have to be started from a pool of your own private capital, and will hopefully come to sustain itself as you get established enough to break even. Try to resist the temptation to solve all your problems by making a lot of money off the band—remember, there's not all that much money in the punk scene, and the more of it you get, the less others have access to for their own projects and needs. You don't need to make a living off your band—you need to develop a lifestyle that enables you to play in it. Seek out other ways to meet your needs—dumpstering food, sharing living quarters, having fun playing music or writing graffiti instead of going to the movies. You'll probably need to make some money in short bursts of wage labor—medical studies, crop harvests, working and quitting, whatever—to pay for your needs and remain free to go on long tours.

It may seem crazy, voluntarily choosing poverty, perpetual uncertainty, exclusion from mainstream economic and social relations just to play music; in the bleak moments, it will feel like you've exiled yourself from the whole world for nothing. But you are investing in something that will pay off, too, something much more reliable than the material wealth of today's erratic market. You're building relationships, community, shared resources ("social capital")—the foundation for a good life no full benefits package could ensure.

### Commitment

Commitment is the bedrock social capital is built on. When you give up all the false riches and reassurances of the capitalist



nightmare, you'll need this from each other more than anything else.

The world we live in, or rather, what world we live in, depends entirely upon our investments: we go on living in this world of sales, wages, rent, and cages because every day, everyone wakes up and—seeing no other viable option—invests their day's activities in surviving within its structures, thus perpetuating them. If you can somehow invest all your energy in creating and perpetuating another world, that world exists at least to the extent that you exist—that's the logic of living a radical lifestyle. Now, one person alone living and believing against the grain can barely survive, let alone make a real impact; but a small tribe of people who reinforce and sustain one another can thrive, and help others open doors to new worlds of their own.

The anarchist punk rock underground, at best, is a network of such tribes, all trading support and inspiration with each other and helping plant seeds that could grow into new realities. At worst, it's just another messy, unhealthy social scene. The most critical, decisive element in the struggle between these two incarnations of punk rock is commitment. A group of people who are ready to go, ready to go through whatever, who know they will be faithful to each other and their dreams through the hardest of times, need not be perfect; as time passes, they will learn what they need to learn and improve where they need to improve.

All that energy that goes into making skyscrapers, writing computer programs, and strip-mining mountains comes from us and folks like us. Even something as simple as buying groceries or gas is an act giving great power to the corporations who maintain the status quo. That same great power is ours when we invest our energy in shared projects instead of dictated routines. Even being at liberty to try this option, no matter how difficult it may be in the trying, is a rare privilege in this society—but that's all the more reason to do so, for everyone's sake, to whatever extent you're able; and playing in a punk rock band is a well-tested model for such an experiment.

When you're considering which people to form a band with, characteristics like musical proficiency and access to equipment should be secondary—a person who has neither but is possessed by a burning desire to play can acquire these. The most important question is—are they down? Likewise, if you want to get anywhere playing punk music or working in cooperative groups of any kind, the most important characteristics you can develop in yourself are commitment, dedication, reliability, responsibility. Don't let your friends down in a tough situation. Let them know, through your actions, that they can count on you for everything

you undertake together.

Three of us can share and minimize rent and food costs, make heart-breaking, riot-starting music, and tour the globe; ten of us can grow vegetables, home-repair vehicles, and set up a long-term housing project; one hundred of us can establish a permanent commune, organize city-stopping demonstrations, and fan out across the country to share those skills, with ten thousand more—but it all comes down to commitment!

### Don't Be a Fucking Jerk

I wish this didn't need saying, and you may not think it does—at least not until pursuing your visions of punk rock revolution to the ends of the earth lands you and your best friends in your first, or fiftieth, really trying catastrophe.

If you raise your voice at your bandmates, apologize explicitly as soon as you can, and try to work out the reasons you lost your head so you can avoid it next time. If one of them raises his/her voice at you and then apologizes, make it clear you accept the apology and harbor no grudge, and ask if there is anything you could do to help avoid this happening again. If no apology is offered, approach your bandmate in a non-threatening way and make it clear how important it is you receive one. Check in with each other consistently—daily, on tour, and not just in formal meetings, in which some members may feel intimidated—about how you're communicating and making each other feel. Solicit constructive criticism, and take your companions' needs very seriously—your band depends on this.

Shouting at your bandmates is abusive, coercive behavior. Such behavior comes in subtler forms: sulking, sarcasm, insensitive teasing, refusing to participate in discussion, dismissing others' perspectives or needs. Forcing others to be the responsible ones (always being the one drinking, never considering others' needs until they remind you, etc.), or to patiently absorb the stress of your outbursts because you're too volatile for dialogue, these are also coercive. If you find yourself thinking it necessary to "get tough" with your bandmates by raising your voice or acting in other ways that make them uncomfortable—or for that matter thinking that they somehow deserve this treatment for something they have done!—then make no mistake about it: you are becoming an authoritarian. Join the fucking cops, get married and raise some kids you can beat the shit out of, whatever, but get the hell out of punk rock—or get your act together.

Make yourself accessible and approachable for dialogue at all times. You may not be able to tell what your bandmates are going through or need support in—or even that they're

going through anything at all—just by watching from a distance; you have to be someone they know they can come to for support, someone they will want to come to no matter what's going down. This is important between all people, but especially so for a small group undertaking long-lasting, high-stress projects in close quarters. Don't get too comfortable in the role of supporter, either—you need to be just as comfortable seeking support as offering it; and if you're offering support, you'd better be sure you're receiving it from somewhere too.

Lastly, above all—make sure you're doing something you really want to be doing. This will make you more accommodating and good-spirited, not to mention the fact that needing "compensation" to justify your activity, as you did when you were waiting tables or washing dishes, will now appear ridiculous. If you really love the music you're playing and the people you're with, you won't care so much if the promoter isn't able to scrape up as much gas money as you'd hoped.

### Translating

To repeat it once more: communication is central to collective activity, and it's a voodoo art if there ever was one. No two people speak the same language the same way—different words, gestures, actions always mean different things to different people. Don't get angry and self-righteous about communication breakdowns—there's no "right" way to communicate, no "One and Only Way" to handle things; anyone who tells you different is trying, consciously or not, to impose their personal system upon the cosmos. On the other hand, some ways do work better than others—ultimately, the only thing that matters is that your group finds a common speech or method that enables you to figure things out with each other.

Something else not to forget: whenever the composition of your group shifts, or even when it remains the same but the people inside it go through changes (as we all always are), you'll have to figure everything out all over again. Even the addition of a new roadie may throw off all the dynamics you had come to rely on; and when you have a new band member or two, don't assume that you can simply march forward according to the plans and procedures you'd worked out before.

### Band Dynamics: A Round Table, Not a House of Representatives

Imagine the relationships in your band as a system that can be diagrammed: support and information pass between some members more than others; pair bonds are formed, tighten, loosen. All this is inevitable, and fine enough; but the general shape of the system has critical effects on the way it works for those inside it. Some bands have circular systems, in which communication takes place between all, or, if two members are not interacting as much, they are linked to each other by everyone else; other bands develop linear systems, in which at some point in the chain of relationships there is one person who alone connects one group or individual to the rest. The circular system is healthy and durable; the linear system is risky and fragile.





Linear dynamics may not necessarily be accompanied by hierarchical power structure—but at the very least, they tend to encourage power polarization. As in the case of the singer-vs.-band dynamic, the skills and needs of the people occupying the two (or more) ends of the line evolve independently of each other, and the resulting specialization of interests can lead to conflict.

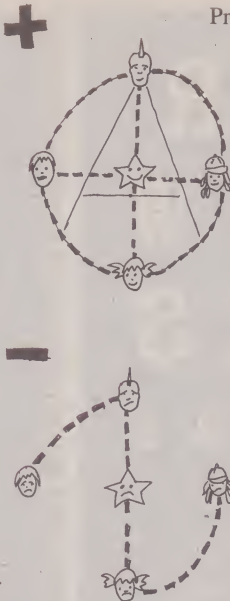
Communication, which ordinarily would resolve such conflicts, is especially difficult in a band that has linear dynamics, because the one person who links the two “wings” of the band has to represent them to each other. Representation is already recognized by anarchists as unhealthy and disempowering: the politicians who claim to “represent” our interests in this so-called democracy inevitably fail us, for one can only learn one’s own interests by representing oneself. Even if the linking member earnestly makes every effort to represent the needs of two parties to each other, he or she does a disservice to both by enabling them to avoid figuring out how to communicate directly. Additionally, the stress this representing imposes on the linking member, especially if one or both sides are being aggressive, can be extremely difficult to bear. This stress, like all stress in a band situation, is inevitably passed back on to everyone else again—so don’t try to be a hero, solving everyone’s problems and carrying the whole group forward on the strength of your diplomacy.

The linear dynamic is a classic problem for bands (and entire touring groups) in which two members are involved in a love relationship, since in our society people in such relationships are encouraged to isolate themselves from others and form one unit, the joint interests of which are then related to the group by one of the two. Blame monogamy monoculture for this. We don’t necessarily need to stop fucking and sucking our bandmates and vanmates, but when we are we need to be especially aware about keeping communication mutual and representation to a minimum. Non-monogamy, not in terms of sex so much as relationship expectations and dynamics, has a lot to teach us on this subject.

It may well happen in a crisis situation that one member will retreat into isolation from the rest of the band, fearing or resenting all of them except perhaps the one who knows best how to communicate with him or her. This situation will not be resolved until the others can recognize his or her needs, and the individual can feel support coming from all of them. As the success of any collective project depends on everyone involved, this should always be possible, somehow—it had better be, since in the long run no shortcut or substitute will suffice.

Avoiding linear band dynamics is as easy, and as hard, as solving every other internal band problem: watch out for bad patterns, keep lines of communication open, don’t be a fucking jerk. Remember not to carry someone else’s load when it comes to communication, any more than any other responsibility; remember also not to be so difficult to approach that others avoid you.

## Protect Your Idealism



Part of being an anarchist is not setting yourself up to be disappointed. Your faith in other human beings, your trust that they can be responsible for themselves and each other, is more integral to what you’re doing than anything else—so whenever possible, don’t give people unnecessary chances to let you down. Carry toilet paper with you, so when there’s none in the bathroom at the squat you won’t hold the whole punk scene accountable for it; learn how to operate a P.A., so you won’t get infuriated at the kids putting on their first basement show for not knowing how to make your vocals loud enough; have extra maps in the van in case of bad directions.

Feel confident enough in your instincts to be able to say a gentle “no” to the drunk gutter-punk who creeps you out when he asks to borrow your amplifier—you don’t want to have any more bad experiences than necessary, since you’ll need to feel comfortable lending that amp to other bands for many years to come. Know what you need, and ask explicitly for it as far in advance as possible, but be self-sufficient and durable too. Enjoy developing these qualities in yourself, so you can consider it an exciting challenge, a final exam of sorts, when your show turns out to be in a one-outlet barn barely above freezing<sup>2</sup>—instead of feeling yourself a martyr crucified by the laziness and stupidity of an unfeeling world.

Ultimately, you should be able to thrive in any kind of environment or cultural context (being on tour is all about learning not to need to impose your own), and to be grateful for whatever people have to offer you, no matter how humble it may be—since in the d.i.y. community, where we’ve done away with notions of debt and duty, everything given is given only out of generosity. Approach everything in this way, and you’ll be easy for everyone else to work with—not to mention you’ll have a better time yourself.

## When Times Get Tough...

Remember, as long as we live in this cutthroat society, troubled relationships are going to be inevitable. That’s why we’re fighting in this revolution! The dynamics within our groups and ourselves mirror the patterns of strife in the larger world around us, and we can’t expect them to be much healthier than it is. The struggle to heal one is the struggle to heal the other, and neither struggle will be concluded until both are. The good news buried in this conundrum is that whatever you discover that does work within your small circle may well also work to change the world at large.

It might help, when things get really bad and you start to feel ashamed of your group, like you’re all a bunch of phonies and have nothing to offer the world or even each other, to consider all the other beautiful, important things that anarchists like yourself have accomplished—that great Amebix record, the resistance in the Spanish

Civil War, the millions of meals served by Food Not Bombs. You can be sure all those feats were only barely snatched from the teeth of internal dissension, resentment, and pessimism. Everything good we achieve, we achieve because we’re willing to engage in projects that are imperfect—and to forgive ourselves and our relationships for that imperfection. The only thing that is perfect is nonexistence. Hold out a little to see what good you might still be able to accomplish, however flawed, before you opt for that.

## Fallout and Aftermath

Sooner or later, even with the best internal dynamics anticapitalism can buy, your band is going to break up. That’s inevitable, just like death (and the eventual abolition of taxes, god damn it). Things may well end in emotional drama and disappointment. Don’t beat yourself up over this—learn what you can, and move on. Again, none of us are perfect, and recognizing that, being comfortable with it, is as radical and positive as our efforts to improve ourselves.

The fact that it comes to an end doesn’t have to mean you were doing the wrong thing, either. It’s like the objection people sometimes bring up against non-monogamous relationships—“Oh, I know some people who tried that, but they ended up breaking up.” Being able to have a healthy relationship includes knowing how and when to conclude it: the conclusion is not necessarily an indication of inherent problems. Not being able to conclude, on the other hand, might be (think of the miserable monogamous marriage that drags on forever, the inmates too proud to admit it’s not working). Seriously, who wants to end up touring with the same songs into old age, like the Rolling Stones?

So don’t get demoralized—take every lesson you learned, every skill you gained, every idea that has yet to see expression, and make that capitalist system regret it ever let you get out alive. Hope to see you in the basements—hope we’ll take it to the streets.


## FOOTNOTES:

<sup>1</sup>Q: What do you call that person who hangs out with the musicians in a band? A: The bassist. Q: Why did the bassist spend the night on the porch? A: He didn’t know when to come in. Q: How many singers does it take to change a light bulb? A: One—he just holds it and the world revolves around him. Q: How many bassists does it take to change a light bulb? A: Who cares?

<sup>2</sup>At the risk of sounding like a maniac, I’ll own that on the last tour we did, during which we played in a number of unheated squats in the middle of winter, I carried a thermometer with me and distracted myself on many a cold night by comparing that night’s temperature reading against other nights’. Make the hard things into a game, whenever you can—don’t take your sufferings too seriously.

Send bitter denunciations of your bandmates, requests for free stuff, and videotapes of shows we played (that would be swell!) to CrimethInc. Punk Rock Retirement Plan/2695 Rangewood Drive/Atlanta, GA 30345 U.S.A.—or waste your miserable life in front of a glowing screen at [www.crimethinc.com](http://www.crimethinc.com)






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This cd weighs in at 6 songs and just a hair shy of half an hour. But it's not a half an hour that should be taken on by the weak at heart or anyone who needs their hardcore in simple, easy to swallow packages. There are moments when this is some of the most beautiful music I've ever heard...lulling me softly into a false sense of comfort. And then without warning, it sounds like the world is ending from inside my stereo...noises so thunderous and concussive that everything on my walls and all the organs in my ribcage shake. Dual vocals attack you from all sides and you can almost hear the vocal chords shredding. If you're into His Hero Is Gone, Zegota, or Isis, this will DEFINITELY be on your "best albums of 2003" list, so save yourself the trouble and just get it early

**burning bridges**  
"the best revenge" cd-lfc007

There are those of us who still remember a time when hardcore and punk seemed like they were about more than store bought clothes and hair. Things weren't always great, and sometimes it got downright scary, but we were all friends, and for those brief hours we all felt so alive that nothing else mattered.

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*The Blood Brothers*

*... Turn, Plane Island, Turn*

The Blood Brothers follow up last year's acclaimed *March On Electric Children* with a delivery of spastic but catchy indie/noise rock'n'roll driven by manic dual vocals and dissonant yet melodic riffs, charged with the fury, energy and revolutionary spirit of fellow status quo disturbers REFUSED and AT THE DRIVE-IN, but possessed of a delivery that is all The Blood Brothers.

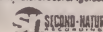
LP stunningly packaged in a gatefold jacket with a full color 16-page booklet. First 500 copies on heavy, high quality 180-gram virgin vinyl, plus 200 copies available exclusively from the band on tour and/or Second Nature website as double one-sided screenprinted LP. Produced by Ross Robinson (GLASSJAW, SEPULTURA, AT THE DRIVE-IN). "Given half a chance, The Blood Brothers just may save rock'n'roll." -Exclaim!

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### 17TH CLASS • Will Eat Your Children's Brains 7"

The sticker on the front labels this band as loud and fast '80s era hardcore jerk punk. While that isn't too far off, they don't strike as particularly old or classic. That isn't to say that the influence of that sound can't be heard here. 17th Class is angry and, from the sound of these songs, they won't be getting over it anytime soon. Their songs are very raw and filled with venom. They sing about people getting diseases, why cars suck, people who make dumb choices, leaders that should die, and (of course) bringing out the thrash. The best thing about this record is that it is the embodiment of a spirit which has run through the scene for so long... The symbol for which is the middle finger. LO (Punks Before Profits/99 Custer St./Buffalo, NY 14214)

### 283 • CD

When you think of emo hardcore, some basic themes come to mind. You can expect very personal (and often pained) lyrics, dramatic breakdowns, building guitar parts, and an overall sense of personality. All of these aspects are strong with 283. In just under an hour, 283 weave a strong web of emo hardcore. LO (61 Lombardi Ln./Fredericton, NB/E3A 1N8/Canada)

### 30 YEARS WAR • CD

This band has been around, in various forms, for about five years. Only recently did they add the final set of members and become as heavy as they are today. They play hardcore punk with a good amount of energy, distortion, and edge. Listening to this CD, you can see the influence of nineties hardcore on this band. Remnants of Rorschach, Heroin, and Born Against can be found in their style, which is probably why they remind me of This Machine Kills. The lyrics are generally bleak and focused on the world around us, which fits the music well. Good stuff. LO (contact@30yearsware.com)

### A LUNA RED • Slimzk! CD

Put on your 3-D glasses and tight pants, turn down the lights, throw back some absinthe, and get your groove on. On this album, whose title should be interpreted as soul music, A Luna Red brings you nine super dancey tracks of new wave, synth-pop with a slightly industrial vibe. The lyrics drip with description, adding to the thick mood created by the sounds. This is the kind of thing you would find on Ache Records, but I hear their next release will be on GSL. LO (Action Driver/PO Box 610/Toledo, OH 43697)

### A PLANET FOR TEXAS • Sprechen Sie Rock? CD

The first song started off kinda sounding like Motorhead and then this turned into a pop punk joke-a-thon. Not really funny to me. NW (Diaphragm Records/PO Box 10388/Columbus, OH 43201)

### A STUDY IN HER • Dialogic CD

A Study In Her is a contemporary outfit who maximize the electronic in each of their songs. They like to take a simple beat, sound, or section of vocals and totally deconstruct it. Then, piece it back together in a way that layers the familiar on the broken and challenging. This is post punk electronica that stays on the mellow side. This began as a solo project but this recording, as well as the live set, has become a conglomeration of folks. LO (Honest In Secret/PO Box 510/Toledo, OH 43697)

### ANCIENT GREEKS • This Song Is You CD

Another post-punk (well, post-indie really) band from Chicago? Yes, indeed there is. Do they breed there, or is this just coincidence. Ancient Greeks are like punk easy listening. They use elements of jazz, the occasional bossa nova, and pop to give their indie flair that special something. Sometimes it is odd to think that the underground has lead us here—but here we are. LO (Flamshovel Recs./1658 N Milwaukee #276/Chicago, IL 60647)

### ABILENE • Two Guns, Twin Arrows CD

The music here is quiet and introspective indie rock. Abilene moves through mellow tones and easy sounds. At times, additional soothing elements like smooth vocals or a soft horn comes to the forefront. For the most part, though, it is just a sweeping soft rock sound. LO (54 40 Or Fight/PO Box 1601/Acme, MI 49610)

### THE AFTERMATH • Dumb And Unaware 7"

The Aftermath plays slightly melodic punk rock with heavy vocals. Their sound seems to oscillate between youth crew style breakdowns and dirty DIY punk melodies. With the scratchy and deep vocals, it makes for an odd mix. The five songs on this record discuss issues that make them depressed or angry. They paint an overall picture of discontent and frustration. With all of these varying styles coming together, The Aftermath manages to make an original record. LO (Grave Mistake Recs. c/o Alex/1635 Generals Hwy./Annapolis, MD 21401)

### AND I CAN'T WAIT • Hardcore Justice 7"

And I Can't Wait is great! They combine super catchy hardcore with politically/socially relevant lyrics; a powerhouse combo for a DIY punk record. Their sound brings crashing drums, distorted guitar, and screaming vocals inline with modern thrashing hardcore. Songs about straightedge sisterhood, the freedom of choice, and pro-active protection victims of sexual abuse speak to the greater problem of sexism we deal with (both in and out of the scene). Additionally, the song about the struggle and cycle of drug abuse tells a very realistic tale of life in America. The fury and energy that comes off this record makes these statements even more poignant in the musical format. And I Can't Wait are pushing the scene into an area of discussion and conflict; which is something you need every few years to get us all on track with the world we want. Highly recommended. LO (Agit Prop! Records/PO Box 748/Hanover, MA 02339)

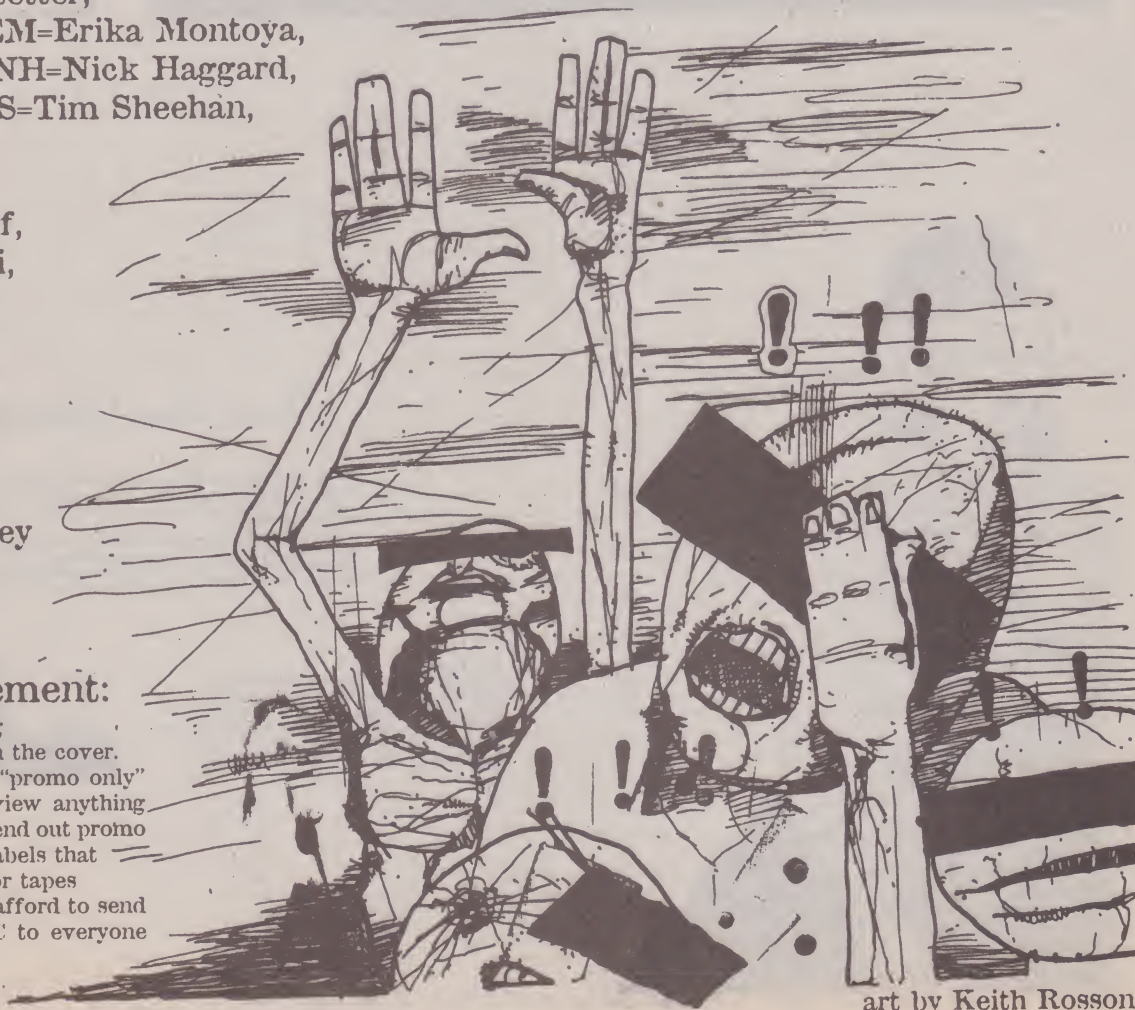
# Record Reviews

!!!

NW=Nate Wilson, AH=Aaron Hall,  
JL=Jeff Larson, CF=Chuck Franco,  
MH=Marianne Hofstetter,  
DF=Dan Fontane, EM=Erika Montoya,  
SJS=Steve Snyder, NH=Nick Haggard,  
LO=Lisa Oglesby, TS=Tim Sheehan,  
KM=Kent McClard,  
MA=Matt Average,  
DO=Dylan Ostendorf,  
JB=John Gradowski,  
EB=Erik Bensberg,  
DJ=Dave Johnson,  
MAH=Mike Haley,  
MM=Mark McCoy,  
BH=Brett Hall,  
FIL=Fil Baird,  
and CD=Chris Duprey

## Rules of Engagement:

We will NOT review anything with pre-printed bar codes on the cover. We will NOT review special "promo only" pressings. We will NOT review anything that is defaced. We do NOT send out promo copies of HaC to people or labels that submit 'zines, records, CDs, or tapes for review. We simply can't afford to send out 400 or so copies of HaC to everyone that sent in promos. Sorry.



art by Keith Rosson



## ALL IS SUFFERING • The Past: Vindictive Sadisms... CD

So a while back (in 2000, man three years ago!) I was hanging out with some friends and someone put on a tape and across the speakers came the sound of pounding and blasting drums, deep, dark and haunting guitars, urgent and incoherent, gruff vocals. All this encrusted, black metal grinding made way into an apocalyptic breakdown of monks chanting and drumming that sounds more like the heavy pounding of metal hammers striking anvils! This breakdown sounds like the end of the world when all the dust has settled upon the remains of the earth. The song "Dragon of the Black Pool" opens like a scene in a (near) future world with the sound of the wind howling machine gunfire in the distance. This song then rips into some ultra fast blasting and a destructive guitar riff. Wow! No joke kids! I had no idea who this band was other than their name. So, after some years of waiting I have the real deal in my grubby little hands. This is the band's newest release and it compiles all of their previous recordings, which are a 7" and two demos. Also included are five new tracks, which I was the most anxious to hear. At first I was a little dubious, maybe because of the different recording and tone, but, after a few spins and stereos later, the five new songs stuck on me like a leech. This band is definitely doing their own thing while combining black/death metal, crust and, grind elements. The songs shred, heavy, fast and unrelenting with the same AIS trademark seal of approval sound. I kind of wish there were more then five new songs, but I'm just being selfish! If you are into the above genres don't let this CD pass you by! Only one grievance, where are the lyrics, I mean with songs like "Crippled, Reviled, and Pissed on by Dogs" and "Massive Violence Upon Seismic Devastation" you know it's got to be good! CF (Crucial Blast/PO Box 364/Hagerstown, MD 21741)

## THE AMAZING VERTICALVILLE • CD

The Amazing Verticalville weave electronic, sampling, spacey moog cadence, and whatever they can make bleep, bloop, and blop with steady drum and guitar work. The songs can be very random and fly off into places unknown, but when they obtain custody of balance, the results are either hypnotic or crazed. It's their call. Listening to these nine songs is like listening to Physics with a slurpee headache, and if blessed with the proper ex-member status, they would be gracing GSL catalogs and Insound top seller lists. MAH (Slide the Needle/1318 Maryland Rd/Ladson, SC 29456)

## ANGRY FOR LIFE • CD

This CD contains many expressions of rage, discontent, and concern for the future. Most of them are steeped in the frustrating reality of today. (The one exception being "Cold Northern Wind" which seems to be about a D&D style battleground of magical races.) Angry For Life play Reagan era hardcore with a slight melody and poppy edge. It is generally solid and well played, but unfortunately the recording lacks energy at times. Some of the songs on here have great musical parts, so this one shows promise for next time. LO (www.ancestorrecords.com)

## ANTI OTPAD • Radnicki San CD

In the 19 tracks on this CD Anti Otpad plays punk rock that changes between a couple styles. Some of their songs are melodic and vocally driven, usually sticking to a more mild tempo. Others are intense and furious with wild sounds coming at you fast. When these two extremes come together, the resulting song is good. All lyrics are in their mother tongue, so I can't really comment on what these songs are about. LO (Humanita Nova/Bolnicka 96/10000 Zagreb/Croatia)

## ANTIMANIX • As Long as People Think CD

Oh, ouch, whygodwhy... ska and pop punk? It's like a peanut butter cup of pain—two terrible tortures in one! Okay, so truthfully there's only ska in about half the songs, and occasionally th' Maniax manage to bring the intensity to a near-hardcore roil, but still it's enough of the aforementioned genres to hurt my soul. At any rate, it seems these lads and lass have their hearts in the right places: animal rights, oppression, war, work, capitalism, globalization, and a few words from Prof. Chomsky on Turkey's human rights record—all the bullets on a liberal activist agenda are covered. Fans of Propagandhi will probably approve. TS (Household Name Records/Pot Office Box 12286/London/ SW9 6FE/United Kingdom; www.householdnamerecords.co.uk)

## ARSEN A.K.A. KONIG DER MONSTER • 7"

Arsen play thick and brutal hardcore in the vein of Rorschach. It is discordant and aggressive throughout, while the lyrics touch on existential questions of humanity in a lighter way. The eerie black and white artwork, German lyrics, and a spooky overall vibe all come together well. It can be an interesting juxtaposition as the medium certainly speaks to the message on this record. LO (React With Protest c/o Ulbrich/Vechtestr. 09/33775 Versmold/Germany)

## THE ATTACK FORMATION • CD

A conglomeration of folks makes up this formation. They use jangly guitars, low-fi vocal effects, and a modern hardcore melody to create this noise. The Attack Formation pushes the boundaries of what you want to call a band, they attempt to create a coalition of sounds and people. It is that coalition that provides the music (the voice) of the attack. Much of their sound skirts the boundary of indie rock, but stays just edgy enough not to join that genre. LO (www.theattackformation.org)

## AUDIO KOLLAPS • Ultima Ratio CD

A quiet soundbite that builds to a dramatic intro is used to open this CD. For the sake of category, I would say this is hardcore first with flecks of metal here and there in things like the sludgy vocals and the manic kick drum. It's not at all casual. The social/political lyrics are written in German and English across no less than eighteen tracks. The punkest part is the photo of the band decked out in not spiky, not-young, crusty get-ups. DF (Epistraphy/PO Box 312/3003 Hanover/Germany)

## BARNHOUSE EFFECT • 7"

Well done DIY screamo from the Netherlands. While their contemporaries, Shikari, travel the heavy heaviness path, Barnhouse Effect has a much lighter sound, often eschewing distortion all together, and thus have a bit of variety in their sound—which in this bastard genre is desperately needed. There definitely are heavy aspects at work here though, and on the second side there are even some elements of grindcore successfully mixed in. Lyrics tend toward the vaguely personal/political, yet are in English rather than their native Dutch, so I don't really feel inclined to judge them on the merits of content. Hand-screened, oversized packaging, very nicely done; also comes with a small booklet with the Vonnegut story referenced by the band's name. TS (Barnhouse Effect/Schonauwensingel 8/3523 JG Utrecht/Netherlands)

## BAXTER • double CD

Baxter was a melodic hardcore band from 1996 until 1999. They put out a couple records, were on a comp, and release a demo which, along with some live stuff a few unreleased songs, are chronicled here. Twenty-six tracks in all. Baxter plays very solid stuff with a lot of heart. Driving melody and rough-around-the-edges vocals emit a heartfelt DIY sound. It is that nicely emotional nineties hardcore that is just really likeable. LO (Will Not Clear Man Recs./PO Box 911/Elgin, IL 60121)

## BEDFORD • Spaceships, Sex, and Jealousy CD

It would appear that Bedford was active from 1995 to 2000, and this CD marks a compilation of their singles. To my ears, the Mr. T Experience is a close reference, but there are probably others and more recent ones. The style is the melting point between pop-punk and indie rock, while the production is very crisp and clean. Having not listened to anything like this in a while, I found myself enjoying the energy. DF (Microcosm Publishing/PO Box 14332/Portland, OR 97293)

## BERT SWITZER • 1977-2002 CD

Bert Switzer is a drummer that played in The Destroyed and Monster Island. Those bands were from the Boston area in the late seventies and early eighties. This CD has the recordings from those bands, as well as a couple jam sessions, and few tracks he did in 2002 after picking up the sticks once again. Most of the songs on here are pretty raw and crazy, just as he describes the bands to be. Playing in The Destroyed, his highlight, he contributed to this band's melodic take on snotty punk. This CD seems to be all about documenting his life and what he felt he was able to express and achieve with drumming. LO (www.bertswitzer.com)

## THE BITTER LIFE TYPECAST • CD

High-pitched, offkey vocals over mid-'90s style mathrock. Guitars remind me of early Jimmy Eat World/Christie Front Drive/Boys Life and the vocal effects bring Antarctica to mind. The Bitter Life Typecast can't quite reach the heights of any of the aforementioned, but the instrumental tracks, such as "0.1%" are quite good. Mogwai seems to be another influence. 11 songs, 38 minutes. DO (Outreach/121 Old Company Rd/Barto, PA 19504; outreach\_records@hotmail.com)

## THE BLACK SEA • CD

A short one, but a groovy one. The eerie effect on the mournful vocals, coupled with the raging guitar licks make for some pretty good mood rock. Maybe similar to Queens of the Stone Age covering Cerberus Shoal's "Farewell to Hightide." One word to summarize the feeling the disc projects: loneliness. Overall, it certainly works for me. 3 songs, 14 minutes. DO (Lovitt/PO Box 248/Arlington, VA 22210; www.lovitt.com)

## BLACKOUT TERROR • The Shortest Distance Between... CD

Blackout Terror plays metal hardcore that grinds and wails. It has a strong resemblance to Majority Rule or even Reversal Of Man. The songs are tight and heavy. They also have some very intelligent lyrics. These songs scrutinize political, social, and punk issues smartly—and they even have liner notes to discuss issues further. That's pretty punk. LO (web.tampabay.rr.com/bt13)

## BLOWBACK • Remember Oneself CD

I was completely blown away by their I Like Time disc from a couple years back. This new four songer has the same effect. Amazing Japanese hardcore, or "Burning Spirits" as some call it. A little bit of Motorhead mixed with Scandinavian influences is always a good thing. Blowback are rockin' while driving and urgent at the same time. From song to song the momentum increases, and all you can think is this is one of the best bands you've ever heard. The songs are wound tight, the drums punch holes in concrete, and the vocals have an unbelievable growl, and don't over look the excellent guitar playing. An essential addition to your collection. MA (H:G Fact/105 Nakano-Shinbashi-M/2-7-15 Yayoi-Cho/Nakano/Tokyo, 164-0013/Japan)

## THE BRAVES • That's the Hoi Part CD

The more I listen to this album, the more it sticks to me like some sort of indie rock epoxy. That's the Hot Part is sometimes moody, sometimes catchy, but always interesting enough to keep you listening. Fans of Death Cab For Cutie, Superdrag, and perhaps even Jimmy Eat World (pre-underwear parties) will dig this record hard. MAH (Arms Reach Recordings/1220 W Hood Apt. #1/Chicago, IL 60660)

## BREAKER BREAKER • Out of Service CD

For fans of this band, sorry to break it to you, but this is Breaker Breaker's final release. This mini CD has some fast and energetic songs from this straight edge hardcore band. They keep a powerful steady beat that builds up in intensity just in time to go into their breakdowns. Yeah they have some decent sing alongs as well. I read somewhere that fans of Bane would be fans of Breaker Breaker... so there you go. EM (Martyr Records/PO Box 955/Harriman, NY 10926-0955)

## BREED EXTINCTION • Alaska CD

Fans of Catharsis style hardcore, complete with intense metal moments and crushing hardcore breakdowns would like this. Breed Extinction plays music that is deep, moving, and brooding throughout. They take you through highs and lows by changing tempo and volume, all the while exuded a bleak and pissed vibe (especially in the lyrics). Parts of this CD also reminded me of newer Majority Rule. LO (Losing Face Recs./PO Box 14641/Albany, NY 12212)

## B. ABUSE • Connemara 12"

B. Abuse surprised me with this record. You can't really tell what to expect from the cover, but I certainly wouldn't have guessed this. Their sound is an especially driving blend of melodic and brooding hardcore. A moody, atmospheric, and dark vibe is cast over the whole record. Even when the songs rock at their utmost, this intense weight is layered over them. This strong sound works well with the number of samples they infuse into the tracks. It makes for an interesting record for sure. LO (Hombre Lobo Records c/o Bert Blees/Kaiserslauterstr. 11/66123 Saarbrücken/Germany)

## BURNING BRIDGES • The Best Revenge CD

I'm more into the throaty vocals when they are just one of a variety of voices that are used on a recording, but on The Best Revenge they are utilized throughout. Although I was not personally into this CD, there is a pretty hefty amount of anger captured in the clean recording of the music. The social/personal lyrics give you a solid taste of the current state of Albany hardcore, where Burning Bridges hail from. DF (Losing Face Records/PO Box 14641/Albany, NY 12212)

## CALLOUSED • ...Still Failing World CD

Wall of sound Scandinavian influenced hardcore punk from this now defunct outfit. I've always been impressed with the stuff I've heard from Calloused, but this EP is astounding!! The songs are put together well. It shows that they took some time. Just check out "Cyclops Eyes" with the steady pacing and the interjections from the second guitar. "The Horse" is definitely the standout of the four songs. The part where the music picks up the pace and races is awesome. Really powerful and effective. Definitely worth picking up. There's also a limited to 100 on blue vinyl with different cover art edition floating around. MA (Sin Fronteras/PO Box 8004/Minneapolis, MN 55408)

## CARRIE NATIONS • Be Still CD

More sweet, DIY-inspired, poppy hardcore from Plan-It X. If you like This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb or The Devil Is Electric you will like this, too. Carrie Nations takes more of an emo rock approach, but the heartfelt expression and positive attitude still come off as the strongest attributes. I like how they have a little comic for each song's lyrics. Carrie Nations is a messy band with a lot of charisma. They seem to be trying to find out what it is all about, which is pretty respectable and makes for good musical inspiration. LO (\$5 to Plan-It X Recs./5810 W Willis Rd./Georgetown, IN 47122)

## CATHODE • ...A Machine That Never Falters CD

Brutal hardcore that has the same driving chords and powerful blasts similar to His Hero is Gone and Catharsis. Their songs start out with loads of energy, and it just keeps going and going. They never seem to let up. They definitely did everything right. They have the tight harmonic guitars that drive into the crushing drums and it just goes crazy from there. Most certainly intense... most certainly good. EM (Mark van de Maat/Nijlandstraat 55/ 7462 RZ Rijssen/The Netherlands; markvdmaat@hotmail.com)

## C'EST MORTEL • CD

C'est Mortel is an experimental band that fuses tempos, sounds, and ideas to create a new art. This CD is structured to have the same feel as a live set by separating the tracks into two main themes. What you get are two halves comprised of about a half an hour of music each. Musically, C'est Mortel seem to be interested in the mellow and trippy and can easily be compared to Slint. LO (Two Sheds Music/PO Box 5455/Atlanta, GA 31107)

## CHALET CHALET • CD

Chalet Chalet is a band that plays quirky and fun rock and roll with an alternative, inventive edge. The band invites you to kick up your heels with them as they work their way through these four songs. Chalet Chalet intices you with unconventional rhythms and enjoyable change-ups. It is an enjoyable mini-set. LO (Walk In Cold/8408 Lakeside Dr./Downers Grove, IL 60516)

## CHAMBERLAIN • 5 Year Diary 1996-2000 CD

Before Promise Ring (and their clones) pretty much ruined the term and style that was emo, there were bands around that played emotional rock with an indie edge which still managed to keep a good amount of character. Chamberlain belongs to that group, though they certainly rode the aforementioned highs and added to the whole emo debacle of the late nineties. This double CD is a complete discography of all Chamberlain releases from 1996 through 2000 along with multiple unreleased tracks, live tracks, and a reprise. The live tracks have a very crisp recording that will please any die-hard fan. For lovers of the indie/emo rock, this CD fills that gap in your chest just the way you hoped it would. LO (Ignition Recs./1 Chandos Rd./Turnbridge Wells/Kent/TN1 2NY/UK)

## THE CURSE • CD

This sounds to me like what happens when Posi Youth dudes discover girls and then Hot Water Music and Leatherface. Sorry, this seems safe and predictable. Nothing new here at all. NW (Hell Bent/PO Box 1529/Point Pleasant Beach, NJ 08742)



## CHANDLER • 7"

This sounds like it could've came out in 1979. It seems like some very experimental, rocking stuff. This stuff sounds both quirky and heavy at the same time. Very weird, almost mathy. I think these guys are Scandinavian. NW (David Blumann/Engelbertstr. 44/50674 Cologne/Germany)

## CITY OF CATERPILLAR • Demo & Live Recordings CD

This is the uglier side of City Of Caterpillar, the sound of strained voices, jangling keys and broken bottles at the heart of this band. Born from the rotting corpse of Monotonashfuck, City Of Caterpillar picked up the pieces and recorded this demo in April, 2000. The other half is from a radio show they played in New York City later that December. (Unfortunately, the first song was lost forever when the "DJ" forgot to press record.) I fucking love this recording, especially the Zima bottle that wouldn't break. It captures all the little shit that the full length LP missed and how much fucking fun they are (and Monotonashfuck was) to see play. FIL (Level Plane/PO Box 4329/Philadelphia, PA 19119)

## THE CLAP • The SLA Took My Baby Away 7"

These guys kinda remind me of the Sex Pistols in a weird way, if the Sex Pistols could've actually played. The songs are wicked short. Catchy as hell punk rock is played here. Supposedly this is limited to 200 copies. This is total James Ross punk rock. I can see that motherfucker pogo-ing around a dumpster, listening to these wankers. NW (Sick of Talk Records/PO Box 9723/Reno, NV 89507)

## COACCION • Desorden CD

Sounds like Doom crossed with Hellnation. Speedy political crust with a nice abrasive side. There's ex-Discordia members here, and you'll definitely hear it in the sound. Buzzsaw guitar, raw throaty vocals, some distortion on the bass, and rapid drumming. I listened to this disc for two days straight. MA (Manuel E. Verdugo/Calle Ing. Fernando Sanchez A. #7906/Col. Zona Norte C.P. 22100/Tijuana, B.C./Mexico; coaaxx@hotmail.com)

## THE COLLYWOBBLES • Excellent Barfighter's CD

Readily applying "The Worst Band of a Lifetime Award" in the form of a rapid succession of broken Budweiser bottles hurled at the thick skulls of these brainiacs would do radical justice to the bearers of such song clever titles as "Rock is a Gift" and "Rockcity #1." Bravo! And while they already seem to be eligible for both "Worst Band Name Ever" and "Most Shameful Over-usage of the Color Purple in Their Bad CD Layout," it all makes me think The Collywobbles are getting way more attention than they rightfully deserve. Sure, any jerk would get their asses kicked by thugs like this in a bar fight—big deal! That's why we're wiping shit on the door handles of their tour van out in front of the venue. MM (Deadlock Records/PO Box 324/7900 AH Hoozeveen/Holland)

## COMIN' CORRECT • Alive and Kicking 7"

This is really fucking bad. Really, REALLY fucking bad. Someone should check to see if this is a band making fun of Comin' Correct, cause that is more believable than a group putting their name on this turd. There is no lyric sheet, so with the exception of the shout outs, all I can hear is "bleh bleh blooth bleh. Unity! Bleehh." I couldn't even imagine a fan of generic New York hardcore being into this record. Christ, I am blown away by how godawful this is. Oh, and a little rule of thumb: your new bad band shouldn't cover your old bad band. MAH (Diabolik Records/BP No 4/94111 Arcueil Cedex/France)

## CONSTRUCTED • A Sick And Desperate Needs That Drives... 7"

Constricted put two songs on this record; each of them a sample of what Japan does best. One is a fast thrash song with lots of crazy punk energy while the other is a thick and brutal assault. For that reason, a lot of other Japanese bands come to mind when I listen to this. You can definitely here some Corrupted in the heavy stuff, as well as some Exclaim in the other. I have to amidst the thrash side was more interesting because the music really jumps off the record. Even its sloppy nature can be forgiven for being so vibrant. LO (Answer Record/Hase Bld. No. 2B1/5-49/Osu/3/Naka-Ku/Nagoya-City/Aichi 460-0011/Japan)

## THE CORLEONES • Soundtrack To Suicide CD

The songs here are slick and refined rock and roll with a slight punk edge. This is pop punk that has graduated from college. The Corleones keep the rock steady and the tones even throughout this CD. They seem intent on creating an infectious rock sound, as each song shoots for the stars. They have included plenty of stickers and ads for this record inside the sleeve, but no lyrics. Instead you get a song list scrawled on the bathroom floor in a naked lady's blood, on the flipside there is a picture of the band. They all lay on a couch with their heads slumped down; they are supposed to look dead but they mostly look hung over. I'm not quite sure what the message is there. The first 300 of these come with hand-screened covers. LO (Sickboy Recs./PO Box 2464/Salt Lake City, UT 84110)

## CORRUPTED • Paso Inferior LP

So I was pretty excited to listen to this new Corrupted LP because I was expecting some intense heavy and powerful sludge. I definitely got that, but this was a bit too slow for me. Maybe not necessarily too slow, but it just took forever to end, and I feel like the song never really had an ending it just stopped. This LP only has one song on it and it takes up an entire side. The song is definitely heavy and depressing but it just never goes anywhere. The entire B side sounded like the musical score to a suspense horror film. It was dark, slow, and heavy with some ambient cuts thrown into the piece. If you are into music that sounds like it progresses into something and then comes back down, then this is the wrong album to pick up. This is just droning heavy and never-ending. EM (Insolito/PF 540115/10042 Berlin/Germany; www.insolito.de)

## COUNTY Z • There Goes the Neighborhood 7"

More waste of the vinyl here. Violins, pounding drums, and some girl screaming. Not heavy... just mellow but pounding enough to give me a fucking headache. Not all that much terror happening here. NW (New Audio Terror/PO Box 8024/Minneapolis, MN 55408)

## CRO(W)S • Durtzy Bunny CD

At first I was amazed at how much the singer of this band sounded like the dude from Hot Water Music. It was like he could fill in if the O.G. singer got too drunk, and it would go unnoticed to a crowd room of Floridians. I was not so amazed when I realized that it WAS the singer from Hot Water Music. Musically they could be compared to a more aggressive Jawbreaker fused with a less aggressive Black Flag. The eleven songs don't cover too much ground, but they do carry a steady energy from start to finish. MAH (www.crowsandpawns.com)

## CUT THE SHIT • Bored To Death 7"

Wee, this record is fun! Fast straight forward hardcore comes jumping off this vinyl. Cut The Shit fits into the growing trend of thrashing skate rock bands from the east coast reviving this classic style. They are pissed and raging, but the guitar hooks and catchy choruses make this dark expression into a party. Woo hoo, this record shreds! LO (Gloom Records/PO Box 14253/Albany, NY 12212)

## DAMAGE CONTROL • Can't Keep Us Down CDep

Damage Control plays full bore hardcore with lot of melody. It is strong sounding and pretty danceable. Much of this CD reminded me of Dead Stool Pigeon or Let It Burn, both bands who play infectious and unrelenting songs. The eight songs here bring in all the good elements of straight edge hardcore. It is a tried and true style that Damage Control plays well. LO (Crucial Response/Kasiersfeld 98/46047 Oberhausen/Germany)

## DANCE DISASTER MOVEMENT • 7"

Moving forward past the musical boundaries that the confined and cluttered realm of punk has dictated to us, Dim Mak Records' newest progressive offering infuses electro-clash dance beats and droning repetition with the organics of actual instrumentation. On the surface, it may appear little is going on here, but when dissected, the continual off-time fills and distorted vocals wait to climaxes in gradually building crescendos that formulate a striking contrast in the coldness of non-emotion with the instinctive desire to move your ass. MM (www.dimmak.com)

## DARK DAY DUNGEON • Know Your Enemy CD

Like some long-thought-extinct branch of society discovered in a dense far off jungle, I find it fascinating there are still such bad pseudo-inspective mosh metal bands like Dark Day Dungeon running rampant as if they mattered. And that's just it, really, embarrassingly oblivious of its ineffectiveness and foolish of the assumption that anyone is still listening, I have to actually reflect for a moment and remember that Pantera is still together and Incision reformed (without the benefit of their second singer) under a different name. So sue me. MM (Let It Burn Records/Kratgartenweg 03a/86683 Asbach Bäumenheim/Germany)

## DAWN TREADER • CD

Oh yeah, unrelenting chaotic hardcore with a biting edge. Dawn Treader grabs your ears and just goes crazy. Their songs are fusion of chaos core insanity and structured emotional hardcore. The highs and lows of sound are fully exploited in these songs. With little downtime between the bursts of energy and noise, Dawn Trader plays just what screamo fans want to hear right now. LO (www.robotwinter.com)

## DEAD FOR A MINUTE • 10"

DEAM play complex HC with different tempos, different textures, different vocal styles which add up to a involving listen. Reminds me of German hardcore that could be on Per Koro Records. Lyrics and jacket print are all in French and I wish there was a translation included. This is killer stuff. JG (Shogun/39 Rue Du Mont D'Arene/51100 Reims/France)

## DEAD IN THE WATER • 7"

Slow to mid-paced hc from Finland with a metal feel to it. Lyrics on the three tracks all seem to deal with the same issue. The demise of society, running from this demise, and maybe even stopping and getting a chance to make it better. Even though I liked the music on side A, it seems to drag a bit on the flip side. In other words, I was wondering if I could listen to a full length from this band. I was just hoping DITW would pick up the pace a bit although after a few listens, it seemed to grow on me a bit. JG (Winter/Erottajaku 29/13130 Hameenlinna/Finland)

## DEAD THINGS • ...Because Sometimes You Just Want... CD

Fucking awesome! Dead Things plays straight up poppy DIY punk with lots of heart. This is the kind of messy and energetic thing that gets under my skin easy. Guitars and vocal that pop and grind, all over a relentless beat. It just makes you want to jump and scream all around. Their songs have a way of talking about their local issues in a way that totally fits into a particular world view. After reading through the lyrics and listening to this CD a couple times, I am convinced these punks are very cool. Did you know they toured their home state last year on bikes? How punk is that! LO (Slave/PO Box 10093/Greensboro, NC 27404)

## THE DISASTER • Black and White and Red All Over CD

The punch line would be a newspaper. But anyway, as for the music contained within, take Kid Dynamite and remove the polish and poppy elements. Add Gorilla Biscuits and lightly shake it up. Mid tempo tuneful hardcore. The playing is clean and the song structures are tight. Which is probably why I don't connect with this. There's no urgency or immediacy, and the style is too accessible. Where's the sweat and chance? MA (Alone/PO Box 3019/Oswego, NY 13126)

## DEADFALL • 7"

New Bay Area thrash on demand! DeadFall makes me think of Dischord bands like Minor Threat, Void or some Black Flag-esque vocals ala Rollins or Ernie from Life's Halt. Fast and adding a modern thrash twist to the aforementioned bands, this 7" offers up eight songs about stress, meatheads, society, and life and death. I think that the Bay Area is coming back with its own new style with bands like this and Born/Dead. The artwork has to be mentioned. Great work! Skeletal demonic soldiers, winged skinheads, crumbling buildings, and protesting punks. I want a poster of the cover on my wall man! If you are into the above check this slab of vinyl out. CF (PO Box 22641/San Francisco, CA 94122)

## THE DEADLY • Phantoms In The Frequencies CD

This short CD has five quick blasts of rock and roll. The Deadly seems to turn it on and not be able to contain it once released. The songs are all explosions of sound, soul, and energy. The lyrics paint a desperate and depraved picture of art, passion, and being drugged. So much of this release is slick rock and roll, were it not for the chaotic punk backbone in some songs it wouldn't have much to do with hardcore at all. LO (Hawthorne Street Recs./PO Box 805353/Chicago, IL 60680)

## THE DEAL • Pretty Words, Better Days CDep

Unlike most bands we get for review from Belgium, The Deal has decided not to play mosh metal. For that, I am thankful. Instead, The Deal sets their sights on straightforward straight edge hardcore. They play intense stuff with lots of miserable personal lyrics to add to the weight of the whole. The six songs here are very well done, but the production quality is a little too high for my personal taste. LO (Sobermind Recs./PO Box 206/8500 Kortrijk/Belgium)

## THE DEATH OF ANNA KARINA • CD

What is this, national Swing Kids rip-off month? Oh I get it, since this is my first issue of doing reviews, pawn off all the shit no one else cares to write about on the new guy, huh? Though, quite honestly, The Death of Anna Karina is by no means treading any uncharted territory here, they are strikingly effective at what they're doing—if chaotic screams are still a revelation in 2003. The production is powerful and explosive, making their attempt at success easily achieved with a sound laden with intensely frustrated emotion. One might even treat this is a nostalgic revival of sorts, since most of the stuff I've heard like this seems to be from Europe anymore. And seeing how Swing Kids left their timely mark in the old world seven years ago now, I can only assume that people over there must've just gotten over their Amexib phase last month. MM (Heroine Records/PO Box 35/47023 Cesena/Italy)

## DEATH OR GLORY • CDep

Since this is on Crucial Response, you can sort of imagine that it will be some kind of straightedge/straight forward hardcore with a hard edge. Crucial Response has released a lot of really great hardcore over the years. Death Or Glory comes out with a very hard edge. They are furious and cranky. Crashing drums and driving guitar back the tough vocals. Most of the songs are about things people do they disagree with. Sometimes they get a little out there with lines like: "You're just a stupid fag!" Shit like that makes it hard for me to really give much of their complaints merit since it comes with a bullshit attitude. Still, the complaints and the attitude are a large part of this band... and it does fit well with music style, making it hard for it to seem inappropriate. (Beyond my own personal tastes at least.) LO (Crucial Response/Kaisersfeld 98/46047 Oberhausen/Germany)

## DEFIANT TRESPASS • Where There is Hope... 7"

Five songs here of weird moshy-hardcore that verges on the edge of crust. Very generic hardcore in my book. The lyrics deal with your typical preach to the converted bullshit. Very safe in my book. Too easy to talk over and over about issues that seem like common sense to most of us in the DIY scene. NW (Sick of Talk Records/PO Box 9723/Reno, NV 89507)

## DESPERATE MEASURES • It's On Your Hands CD

What's on my hands????? Dirt? I'm usually pretty good about keeping my hands clean. And I'm definitely smart enough not to draw some ridiculous X on the back of my hand with a marker. But I bet I can't say the same for Desperate Measures. By the numbers straight-edge hardcore. The late '80s influences of crap bands is rampant: Warzone, YOT, Slap Shot, etc. Lyrically it's the same old shit about friends, live your life (as long as you stay straight), and being dedicated (to something as shallow and consumer minded as straight-edge). "Times You Share" reads like one of those inspirational posters you find in the break rooms of office jobs, or any job outside of construction. Really trite and simple minded. Yawn... MA (Youngblood/217 W Main St/Ephrata, PA 17522)

## DISCIDER • Drinking To Forget The Future 7"

Tackling issues of politics, social control, and science, Discider launch an assault in four songs. Their brand of grinding crust punk fits well with themes they discuss. Overall, the music is catchy and fun to listen to. The crunching tones are placed within particular breakdowns that keep it interesting. In fact, some of the songs have an almost poppy tempo. It is an odd mix of up tempo and dark tones that come together well. LO (First Blood Family/PO Box 1766/Madison, WI 53701)

## DISGUST • The Horror Of It All... CD

Haven't listened to these guys in some time. Think of Discharge crossed with Disrupt. Sonic as hell with an almost blinding speed and unrivaled fury. By the end of the listen I was exhausted. They stick to the formula: lyrics on war, war graphics, verse-chorus-verse, an occasional bridge, or solo. I'm not complaining though. This is exactly what I want and expect from bands like this. Crank it up! MA (Crimes Against Humanity/PO Box 142/Eau Claire, WI 54702-1421)



## DEATH FROM ABOVE • Heads Up CD

Death From Above brings the serious rock out with six songs here. With just drums, bass, and vocal effects, this duo is able to create fully infectious dance songs with a new wave bite. Aspects of their sound remind me of God Head Silo or Lightning Bolt, especially when the vocals layer over particularly catchy beats. Their lyrics discuss relationships with a biting honesty and original flair. You can't resist a foot tap or booty shake while listening to these songs. Death From Above is the most enjoyable Ache release thus far for me. LO (Ache Recs./PO Box 138/1001 W Broadway #101/Vancouver, BC/V6H 4E4/Canada)

## DISTURBANCE • Live On To Decline 7"

The songs on this 7" are heavily reminiscent of punk rock from the eighties. (Fogies take note, one of their songs is even about how the scene was better then.) Disturbance plays structured songs with choruses full of punk rock spirit. Their angry lyrics and simple beat speak to the basics of the style, but the infusion of thoughtful lyrics and catchy guitar bring an element of sophistication to the mix. The music here ignores all modern influences and goes straight to the heart of it... mowhawks and all. LO (www.tocado.com)

## DOG • Live at Liquid Den CD

Twenty minutes of fuzzy guitar noise with a woman saying things that I could barely understand for over half of those twenty minutes. Then Mr. Sad Pants takes over and screams for a little bit, and then some sort of beast starts to growl from the depths of this dark noisy pit. The sound is super fuzzy and I wasn't able to make out what these people had to say. But twenty minutes of this was pretty tough. EM (7726 Lilac Ln./Santa Susana, CA 93063)

## DOG • Blood CD

Poorly recorded experimental music that's about as enjoyable as listening to downtown traffic. MA (Love Earth Music/7726 Lilac Ln./Santa Susana, CA 93063)

## DOWN AND AWAY • Make it Matter CD

The sentiment of this record's title does seem to come through. I'll call it motivated. Down and Away play driving pop punk ala the style of Face to Face or one of the other bands that used to (and maybe still are) on Fat Wreckords. With group vocals and political lyrics it has a street kind of a sound. For me, it was more of a toe tapping than a head bobbing sound, and in that capacity I got a lot of listening enjoyment out of it. DF (Rockstar Records/Verbindungsstrasse 9/52080 Rockcity Aachen/Germany)

## DRACULA SUCKS • CDep

For some reason, they decided to package this CD in that slim CD-R case with what seems to be a homemade cover. So, of course, I spent a while trying to figure out whether this was a demo; it seems to be a regular release. Dracula Sucks plays highly melodic hardcore with a few indie rock influences. The parts with accompanying vocals are quite catchy, while the grooving instrumental parts are soothing. Dracula Sucks has a very satisfying rock here, but unfortunately no songs about wooden stakes or garlic are to be found. LO (Die Die Diamond Records/PO Box 161925/Austin, TX 78716)

## THE EPIDEMIC • Now Museum, Now You Don't CD

The Epidemic consists of Andy (and Andy alone) from The Red Light Sting. The music here has comparable influences to the band, though this project seems to be more about the deconstruction of music and the recreation through technology. There are song elements combined with crunchy electronic breakdowns as the tempo changes to fit the desired effect and meaning, as do the lyrics (or lack thereof). There are some interesting ideas here to ponder. Love the title. LO (Ohev/PO Box 772121/Coal Springs, FL 33077)

## EXPERIMENT IN TERROR • Who Will Survive... CD

This band kills it. I have to say this, it sounds like a spastic and hyper thrash version of From Ashes Rise or a band of that dark crusty style. These ten songs clip by at a rapid pace and I was left wanting more after the first listen. The lyrics are excellent social political and knowledgeable and are spat out at great speed. I have to say over the machine gun blasting and shredding guitars the vocals definitely add a new element where bands of this style are bogged down by guttural or screamo style vocals. You can actually hear the words as they are yelled out and seem full of sincerity. Super fast and like a kick to the groin, you feel lingering with you after you catch your breath and get off the floor. Really though; this is a great release and I bet these guys kill it live. Once again I have to give it up to the lyrics, urgent and original—not just regurgitated crap—ditto for the music as well. This is an experiment in terror and you all are the fucking guinea pigs! CF (alistrecords@hotmail.com)

## EYES OF AUTUMN • Hello CD

From a young three piece comes some sugary sweet indie rock... Musing on ideas and flirting around with light tempos and moods, Eyes Of Autumn creates a nice blanket of sound. The sound stays pretty, especially as the moments of harmony are broken by simple vocals standing alone. This release goes for being honest and sophisticated at the same time. For the most part, they succeed. LO (54 40 Or Fight/PO Box 1601/Acme, MI 49610)

## FAIRBURN ROYALS • From A Window Way Above CD

Fairburn Royals craft their blend of indie and pop smoothly. Their songs meld epic high and sweet lows as reserved vocals wax poetic. The CD is easy to listen to and easy to appreciate it. The honest and straightforward delivery of these songs makes Fairburn Royals especially appealing for this reviewer. I prefer this style without pretense, and they avoid that. LO (Two Sheds Music/PO Box 5455/Atlanta, GA 31107)

## FALL TIME • Coma CD

I have to say, I am impressed with the cohesive nature of this recording. Fall Time have a lot going on. They use dark and brooding elements along with light interludes to create a hardcore sound that goes to all of the extremes. They play each piece fully, and the highs and lows pass seamlessly throughout this CD. So much of this sound is all music that you can easily forget there are vocals at all. Fall Time likes to find a groove and explore it fully. Depressing and ominous tones go straight to the bottom of the pit, and there is no real escape. This sets of songs expresses that foreboding feeling very well, as that makes up the majority of the sound. With songs so unbelievably long and intense, a live set must totally wipe these guys out. LO (Fire Walk With Me/PO Box 65/1110 Wien/Austria)

## FOURTH ROTOR • Seize CD

Fourth Rotor seems to be a band of older folks playing a DC inspired melodic sound. The music here is intensely melodic and heavy, with dominant vocals in every section. Their lyrics are observations or stories that at times reminded me to the offbeat story style of Lungfish. Fourth Rotor plays their rock heavy with catchy hooks and quirky changes. They make the most of this CD by adding live footage, still photos, and flyers on as well. LO (Electric Noise Records/2842 N Springfield Ave./Chicago, IL 60618)

## FAR FROM BREAKING • Made My Choice 7"

At first glance, this looks like one of those generic Youth Crew records from Europe (Onward, Sportswear, Eyeball, etc.). At second glance, it is a generic Youth Crew record. The same old lyrics about "changing," "choices," and "mistakes." Sounds a lot like Chain of Strength. Nothing new, nothing different. NW (Third Party Records/21 Nancy Ln./Amherst, NY 14228)

## FEAR MY THOUGHTS • Vitriol CD

The disc starts off with a noise track with samples... leads me to think that it's going to be a Gospelsque You Black Emperor-style band... then the speed metal kicks in. It's metallicous alright, but for someone who is not a connoisseur of metal, myself for instance, it doesn't really stand out. It's played very well, don't get me wrong, but I just don't hear much new going on here. I like the lyrics, the artwork, the recording, everything... it just doesn't necessarily stick out. I like it more with every listen, though, so if you like fast metal, with some moody interludes, it may be your favorite of the year. Maybe the Let It Burn website has some sound bites for you to make your own informed decision. All signs point to a well-made and well-played record. 7 songs, 33 minutes. DO (Let It Burn/Krautgartenweg 03A/D 86683 Asbach Baumenheim/Germany; www.letitburnrecords.com)

## THE FICTION • LP33 12"

San Diego-rock ala Swing Kids emanating from these four New York-based kids. Recorded by Steve Roche of Saetia fame, this LP fits right in with the collections of those of us stuck in the mid-'90s. It's not all thrashy jazzy "emo," but some of the meandering quieter interludes like The Trigger Quintet and Don Martin 3 used to employ. I was less than blown away the first listen through, enjoyed it more the second time, and anticipate liking it more with every listen. Eight songs, which hurry by, as this is a 45 in a 33's clothing. Suckers for screamo should pick this up. I'd very much like to witness a live show, as a throwback to my younger, louder days. DO (Level Plane/PO Box 4329/Philadelphia, PA 19118)

## FIRE DOWN BELOW • F CD

F is a four song CDep from Philadelphia's Fire Down Below. The band plays caustic punk rock with chunky guitars and harsh vocals. I believe there are two vocalists in this band (male and female), but it's hard to distinguish them on this recording. Most of the lyrics are hard to read, and before you know it, this CD is over. It's pretty hard to get a feeling for this band in the short time we have together, but based on the heavy parts of "Scavengers," I would totally check out a full length with a legible lyric sheet. MAH (Get The Axe/PO Box 3019/Oswego, NY 13126)

## FLATPOINT A/V • 7"

The debut EP by this melodic punk band is catchy, interesting, and high energy. The lyrics are not obvious as to what they're talking about, but they're still good anyway. I really like the guitar melodies—very dissident, wonderful, and even beautiful at times. This is the kind of new school punk that's different from all of the other generic/crap-core out there, because it's actually really good. DJ (Redundant Audio International; www.13atprodigy.net)

## FOUNDATION • Homecoming 7"

For the listless and uninspired schlubs cluttering our existence, fear not, life really is a romantic comedy! Yes, you too can stay one step ahead of Urban Outfitter's constantly revised store soundtrack of who's hip and swing over to the Border's Books next door to hear Rob Huddleston's and Alison Mossheart's banal acoustic open-mic talents ruling the corporate cafe circuit. If plugging ex-members of Ann Beretta as a selling point is an absolute must, at least get someone past their first year of art school to paint your shitty fucking record cover. Title track could very well be the opening song for the pilot that revives Tori Spelling's TV career. MM (Steve Stevenson/420 Wall St. #206/Seattle, WA 98121)

## FOUR • CD

This discography chronicles the releases of an early nineties pop punk band from Colorado. By the sound of them, they could have just as easily been from the East Bay perhaps playing shows with the likes of Operation Ivy or Crimpshrine. There are 35 little ditties here to take you back to the days of sloppy love songs. LO (Paco Gardens Records/PO Box 18455/Denver, CO 80215)

## FOLKLORE • Signal to Trust CD

Jangly, emotive, and Gern Bladsten-worthy, this is uber-contemporary 21<sup>st</sup> post-punk in its most textbook form. One note guitar and bass chopppiness interweave with start/stop self-assuredness, refusing us the benefit of continuity for even a single measure. Lead by a vocalist like a tired Frank Black, Folklore seems to be sputtering along at such a dull pace that they sound like they're running out of gas from start to finish. If music is such a direct reflection of our moods, sitting through this then becomes a technical exercise in aural masochism. For a better example of this music, try Chicago's Calvary. MM (Modern Day Record Label/PO Box 8886/Minneapolis, Mn/55408)

## THE GHOULES • Communication CD

The Ghoules strike me as a band highly influenced by Refused. Their music combines fierce political lyrics and a strong sense of rock. The Ghoules is a high-energy outfit that blast out fourteen tracks of driving rock and roll. Based on my earlier assessment, it seems only fitting to compare them to The (International) Noise Conspiracy—though they also remind me of Dead Stool Pigeon when the rock gets down and dirty. The look of this CD doesn't exactly scream "good content," so that was a nice surprise. LO (Rockstar Recs./Verbindungsstr. 9/52080 Aachen/Germany)

## GLORY FADES • Love, Expulsion, Revolution 7"

I had high hopes for this 7" once I noticed the Unbroken vibe in the title. Their sound falls more to the youth crew side though. It is high energy fun with a good brain. The political lyrics about Columbia and heavy criticism of violence, negativity, and (best of all) vampires gives your brain something to chew on—which is always good. Glory Fades plays a tried and true hardcore style that keeps the kids dancing/moshing and the party going, so it is nice to find them adding original thought into the mix to keep it fresh. LO (\$3 to Eric Yu/104 Benny Ln./North Andover, MA 01845)

## THE GOONS • Live At The Black Cat CD

On a particular weekend, The Goons played some shows with The Varukers and Molotov Cocktail. The fifteen-song set featured on this CD came from their first stop. The Goons plays fast punk rock with a strong vocal presence. All of their songs have a lot of structure and are easy to groove to. Melodic and driven, it's a classic sound that could have just as easily come from the eighties as today. In an attempt to really capture The Goon's live performance, this CD also includes video and still footage for you to enjoy. LO (Squirrel Heart Records/PO Box 5871/Arlington, VA 22205)

## GRIMPLE • discography CD

Fast to mid-past punk rock from this east Bay band. This is a bit dated, I guess, but nonetheless, I love it and it's the kind of stuff I was listening to and watching at early Gilman Street shows. If you ever loved Crimpshrine, Corrupted Morals, or even Filth, this stuff has a bit of all those elements. It's catchy, East Bay punk. Nothing more, nothing less. It's got the '80s Gilman Street punk written all over it. Twenty-two quirky songs here. NW (Prank/PO Box 410892/San Francisco, CA 94141)

## HEAT LIGHTNING • Even a Baby Could Do That CD

The sound recording wasn't too hot on this one, but in actuality I think it helps with what they're playing. I never did really figure out what they were playing, or what they were trying to do. The first song was like an old country punk rock song. Track four was a nice mellow song and the violin was a nice touch, but the rest of the songs... oh man, bad keyboard music at its worst. I'm still asking myself what this was all about... maybe it was a joke? EM (Horrendous Failure Studios/PO Box 7504/Ann Arbor, MI 48107)

## HEROS SEVERUM • Wonderful Educated Bear CD

This CD is one of those that takes a few listens to truly appreciate it. I knew that I'd grow to like it, as I like most J. Robbins-recorded albums. The polish on the production actually enhances the raw energy and precision of the innovative rock. Spoken male and female lyrics, interspersed with intricate guitarwork and offtime drumming. While the promo sheet makes mention of pioneers such as Minutemen and Mission of Burma, I also think that latterday heroes Rain Like The Sound of Trains and Smart Went Crazy are potential reference points. Anyway you dice it, these guys might grate on the kids who want sappy, easy-listening... but for those with more grownup tastes should embrace this unique trio. Really cool stuff out of Athens, GA. Favorite tracks: "Grounded... Like a Prop Plane" (#2), "Out of Athens" (#6), "Colors - Paint and Body" (#7) and "A Better Man" (#11). 11 songs, 38 minutes. DO (Two Sheds Music/PO Box 5455/Atlanta, GA 31107-5455; www.twoshedsmusic.com)

## HORROR SHOW • Our Design CD

The theme of this CD seems to be: girls and what they do to you. From the pretty pink artwork, to the subtle photos, to the lyrics it becomes apparent that the loves in the singer's recent history have made a profound impact upon him. With straightforward hardcore played tough, these songs could easily be about staying true to friends and sticking to your morals. (Okay, well one is.) The music here is solid, but I'm not real interested in this Converge-loving scene to get into the bands that come from it at this point. LO (Deathwish/10 Lothrop St./Beverly MA 01915)

## HOT HOT HEAT • Scenes One Through Thirteen CD

Before this band became all the rage on Sub Pop, they had released this CD on Ohev. Looks like, in the recent popularity, this CD has come back for another round. Musically, these songs are the most like their material on the split LP with The Red Light Sting. Hot Hot Heat plays infectious new wave with a slight Nation Of Ulysses vibe. (I said slight.) The songs here are good, without any over affectation. (Okay, some.) This CD is a good example of the new age of rock out, the kind with keyboards. LO (Ohev/PO Box 772121/Coral Springs, FL 33077)



## HOUSE OF LOW CULTURE • *Gettin Sentimental* 2x7"

House Of Low Culture is that Aaron Turner dude from Hydra Head. I assume that is why most people give this stuff the time of day. Unlike other projects, House Of Low Culture branches out into the noise genre. These 7" display mostly atmospheric, minimalist noise. In the beginning, it is like the soundtrack to a wasteland without time and then, a few sides later, voices and acoustic guitar comes in, lighting the overall vibe. It is pretty easy to listen to because so much of it just seems like background noise. I didn't find any particularly meaningful layers or deconstruction here, but I'm sure that is the main drive for this project. LO (Robotic Empire/12001 Aintree Ln/Reston, VA 20191)

## INANE • *Kill'em & Grill'em* CD

Treading on all the familiar ground that death metal has achieved in past years proves that once it's at a standstill, it's hardly taking a leap by spicing it up with flares of hard-hitting rock beats. However, it's when Inane comes pounding down every poser in their path with triggered double bass, drop "D" tuning, and inhumanly low growls that one starts to actually count the mounting corpses and severed limbs covered in nautical tattoos. You may even say to yourself "Fuck, this fuckin' intense shit hearkens the glory days of better bands like Incantation or Suffocation!" and you'd be hitting the nail right on the cadaver's nose. Take one glance at the booklet and you'll aptly remember there are few surprises when it comes to death metal: relentless and shameless malevolence and an awful overdose of blood and carnage to rot in your yearning fantasmal mind as you slave away at work in your pathetic cubicle all day. MM (Per Koro/PO Box 102514/28025 Bremen/Germany)

## INHUMAN • *Black Reign* CD

My first look at this was of sepia-tone destruction and the track first four of seven track titles: Prelude to Misery, Life is Miserable, Killing Me, and Darker than you Think. That's pretty dark actually, and I was daunted by the prospect of how gruesome this might be. The intro to the "Prelude" brought back memories of the Headbangers Ball, and then it proceeded to rock in all the right hc/punk kind of ways. The mood was not the one I feared, although the lyrics are pretty grim. Finally, the disk ends with two live tracks, which I often appreciate on studio releases. DF (The Inhuman Legion/181 12<sup>th</sup> St. Apt. 1R/Brooklyn, NY 11215)

## JABARA • *Why We Wish* 12"

When I first read about this band at the Prank Records web site, I was interested. Three out of the six songs totally remind me of some songs off of GISM's *Detestation*, and the rest are ass kicking hardcore punk. These guys fuckin' rock! The lyrics are in Japanese and are translated in English. It's really hard to capture the true nature of lyrics in translations, especially considering a complex language like Japanese. But anyway, I get what they're saying. Also, some info I got from Prank: "The cover is by the renowned Japanese artist TOM whose artwork has graced Japanese Punk records since the early 1980s and most recently the What Happens Next *Stand Fast Armageddon Justice Fighter* LP." If you like GISM or any Japanese hardcore punk, get this. DJ (Prank Records/PO Box 410892/San Francisco, CA 94141-0892)

## JAZZ JUNE • *Better Off Without Air* CD

Okay, Jazz June is really good at what they do but (snore) what a boring CD. They have honed their sound and the newest Jazz June release is precise indie rock. It is so smooth and structured, it just begs for college radio airplay. After listening to this, I just kept wondering what the point was. I fumbled through their poetic lyrics about personal shit and I didn't find anything that I could really take away from it. Is the point merely to sound good? Sure, they might be pushing some kind of indie rock envelope that I don't understand, but I also just don't care. There is nothing of interest for me here... just smooth rock. LO (Initial/PO Box 17131/Louisville, KY 40217)

## JESUSEATER • *Step Inside My Death Ray*! CD

This band features a certain member of the much-loved and highly-esteemed Swiz, and although the music here even sounds a little swizzy, though significantly sanitized and slowed-down, this is most definitely *not* Swiz. The aesthetics are very "tattoo culture"-driven, very Americana, and as you'll see in a moment, the sleazy baggage of tattoo culture has come along for the ride quite intact. A quick look at the website of the label that released this gives us some gems in their description that lauds this turd with such phrases as "infectious, unforgettable, and intense songwriting"; "amazing release which quickly won over the harshest of critics worldwide with it's [sic] mile thick rock hooks, gritty hardcore volume, and genre defying originality"; and finally, "to put it bluntly, this album smokes." This album absolutely *does not* smoke, and neither is this release gritty, original, nor genre-defying. Far fucking from it, in fact, and if I were feeling generous (I am not), I would describe it as "competent bar rock." And while at this point I would have merely derided this as "offensively inoffensive," once I popped the disc into my CD-ROM, I got a little treat in the form of an "independent film" that prominently features sultry tattooed ladies pillow-fighting while clothed only in bras and g-strings. The film then segues into the "'live' show" gimmick used in so many music videos, and the "sexy ladies" are now egging the pit on at the foot of the stage in "wife beaters" ostensibly acting as bouncers, but any way one cuts it they come off more like trophies, or groupies, or whatever fucking shit is going on in the rock industry that seems to be so rapidly encroaching on the fringes of hardcore. This is all the more disturbing to me, as the front man for this group once wrote and screamed some of the most gut-wrenching and personal lyrics against racism and was truly inspiring to me, but apparently a little sexism is a-okay if moves units, or gets the band laid, or what the fuck ever; suffice to say, whatever analysis is at work here is grossly incomplete and problematic. Shawn Brown, what the fuck happened to you? TS (Deathwish Incorporated/10 Lothrop St./Beverly, MA 01915)

## KATASTROFIALUE • *Tuskatakuu* 1994-1998 CD

This Finnish band blows out 25 songs in about 45 minutes on this CD. Their crushing mix of thrash, crust, and grind make each of their songs razor sharp and deadly. I liked the precision and craft these songs have, especially since they seem so basic and raw at the first listen. Katastrofiaue began about ten years ago and put out records through the later part of the 1990s. This discography CD comes in a DVD case with a full booklet of lyrics (with English translation) and a listing of where the songs came from. Many of the songs here are previously unreleased. LO (Crucial Blast/PO Box 364/Hagerstown, MD 21741)

## KATHY CASHEL • *The Rare Animal Zoo* CD

Kathy's musicianship takes center stage as she weaves through fifteen sweet acoustic songs. The sound is low; the chords and vocal combinations stay on the deep end of the spectrum. Her personal poetry is well written, which gives a nice depth to the music. Much of this CD seems inspired by folk rock, which prefers a controlled whisper and well chosen words. LO (Exotic Fever/PO Box 297/College Park, MD 20741)

## KILLED IN ACTION • *Exit Wounds* CD

Full blast thrash attack from start to finish. No surprise they shared a split with Crucial Unit, as they are two bands who keep the needle in the red on the speed thing, along with blown out vocals, serious and silly lyrics, etc. Dual vocals, churning guitars, and rapid fire percussion. This disc has enjoyed quite a bit of time on my stereo. May be the one thing I've listened to most the entire year. I love how you can hear one of the vocalists inhaling air before he screams out another line. I need to see these guys live. This CD includes their split with Crucial Unit, demo, "Wild In the Streets" track, and the EP from which the title is taken, and some video footage. MA (Get the Axe/PO Box 3019/Oswego, NY 13126)

## KOCHEN MIT GLAS • 7"

This highly intense 7" has a mix of chaotic emo and heavy grindcore... sort of like Systral and Pg. 99 going out on a date. At times the mix is a little to rough to really enjoy, but other illuminated moments come out quite well. Their lyrics get buried under the sound and are difficult to distinguish, especially when it sounds like the singers are just vomiting into the microphone. Overall it seems like there is just a little too much going on to capture well on a record. It would be easier to digest live. LO (Better Home Plastic Corp. c/o S. Day/Leverkusenstr. 14/22761 Hamburg/Germany)

## KITTY LITTLE • *Nice Noise* CD

What an appropriate title this thing has! Kitty Little plays poppy rock and roll with sweet guitar hooks and catchy parts galore. I like how they can harmonize, but one of the singers really can't sing (in the good way). It is highly reminiscent of K Records sugar pop. This is the kind of band that plays a basement and gets all the people dancing silly. LO (Peter Walkee Recs./PO Box 14794/Albany, NY 12212)

## LAFALCE • CD

LaFalce gives you nine tracks of brutal and uncompromising modern hardcore here. Their sound is strained, grinding, and very chaotic. A lot of their music is reminiscent of the heavy screamo stuff like Reversal Of Man or Combat Wounded Veteran. LaFalce has come to kick your head in for sure. Occasionally, they throw in the slight mosh metal breakdown, but more than not it is just tight and crazy hardcore. LO (Vigorelli Natalino/Via Archimede, 31/24040 Osio Sopra (BG)/Italy)

## LOST KIDZ • *DIY* CD

From the realms of Quebec comes this heavy handed hardcore. Lost Kidz brings you something between hardcore and grind; music with a lot of weight and fury that seems to just beat at your head. The more you listen to it, the more you can appreciate the layers. The five songs here move slowly to the point of explosion, emotional highs and lows are expressed within the music since the vocals keep a static growling tone. Most of the lyrics are in French. LO (\$8 to Benoit Pepin/432 Boul. Queen Nord/Sherbrooke, QC/J1H 3R3/Canada)

## THE LAGGARDS • CD

I guess Felix Von Havoc has started a new street punk oi band... The Laggards. Okay, maybe not. These guys are from Minneapolis, though, and the guy on the back sorta resembles Felix a bit. Six songs here that don't do much for me (of course, not much Lisa sent me this month does). I can picture a bunch of drunk kids with mohawks running around in a circle while these guys are playing in some cheesy club. NW (DIY Or Die/2616 15th Ave. S/Minneapolis, MN 55407)

## THE LAPIS SANCTUARY • 7"

This is pretty good. The Lapis Sanctuary plays really heavy hardcore with screamo vocals that linger. The mix works well and most of the songs end up being totally brutal and punishing. Their lyrics can be pretty cryptic, but they are basically about the shit they see all around. The similarities to Reversal Of Man are plentiful here, though I think The Lapis Sanctuary has them beat in terms of straight-up heaviness. LO (The Dupage Collective/174 Sheffield Rd./Glen Ellyn, IL 60137)

## LIVING UNDER LIES • 12" EP

Pretty much decimates their first EP. Huge sound with a dense guitar, gravelly vocals and drums that hit HARD! I want to compare them to HHIG, but they're not completely like that band. There's a bit more speed, as well as room in the sound, not to mention an air of desperation. I love the guitar sound with the sickly notes and apocalyptic atmosphere they create. The lyrics are equally interesting, addressing the usual suspects; greed, infringement of our rights, etc. But presented with a well informed point of view, unlike the majority of bands. Thumbs up!! MA (Dissonant Sound Industries/PO Box 2355/Portland, OR 97208-2353)

## LAST IN LINE • *Congested* 7"

This is some damn angry hardcore, and it looks like their shows are fun. They manage to be catchy, without losing the anger and urgency of their sound. And they even have an H.P. Lovecraft inspired song too! Good stuff. CD (Gloom/PO Box 14253/Albany, NY 12212)

## LE PROFESSEUR LADYBUG • CD

Taken from a live set, this recording has all the pops and fuzz of the show experience. Le Professeur Ladybug brings you some noise. They screech, sing, and bang for about ten minutes. It is pretty hard to grasp what the live set is like, unless it is just noise. I have a feeling there is a good amount of theatrics that go along with this; without which this isn't too interesting. LO (Horrendous Failure Studios/PO Box 7504/Ann Arbor, MI 48107)

## LO CAST STYLE • 7"

Melodic hardcore from... Actually it doesn't say where this band is from. The music is decent and the lyrics are okay, but I'm just not a fan of melodic hardcore. I hate to say that it doesn't do much for me, but it's the truth. Maybe if this ended up in someone else's hands it would get a better review. DJ (locaststyle@hotmail.com)

## MALKOVICH • 12"

Malkovich plays modern hardcore that is packed with melody and chaos. Their sound overflows energy and weight. If this can be called chaotic hardcore, it certainly skirts the edge of that genre. Most screamo bands shy away from this kind of deep, almost metal, sound. The more you listen to this record, the more you can appreciate the little grooves it works in. In some ways, it reminds me of the early JR Ewing records. This 12" is one-sided, so you can easily leave it on repeat to be crushed by Malkovich's insanity over and over. LO (Haarlemmerstraat 33/2312 DJ Leiden/The Netherlands)

## MATABURRO • *War in the Woods* CD

These guys are from my region... the Albany, NY area. The first song started off sounding a lot like Acme or something in the German metal vein. As the CD moves forward, it becomes more and more filled with Iron Maidenish double leads and crazy Slayerish parts. The vocals are doubled and sometimes tripled. Be well prepared, this is full-on metal, for this is far from hardcore or punk. I've never seen them live but after hearing the CD, I'd be very interested in seeing these progressive metal dudes wank their instruments. This is well done. I'm shocked Hater of God hasn't put something out by these guys. I'm wondering if these guys' graphics were influenced by Albany's Wolfpack LP (ha ha). NW (Slave Union Records/PO Box 324/Cohoes, NY 12047)

## METROPHON • CD

The Germans seem to have the edge these days when it comes to complex indie rock with an emo hardcore flair. More and more bands from Germany are exploring and honing this sound. Metrophon are no different. They remind me of late Four Hundred Years, early Milemarker, and just a touch of Monochrome. Metrophon plays sophisticated hardcore with layers, tweaked guitars, sound effects, and the occasional horn. It comes together well, sounding not only good but real. They somehow avoided the overproduction that kills most music like this and have been able to release a CD full of energized sounds and new ideas. LO (The Company With The Golden Arm)

## MOLOTOV COCKTAIL • *Once Upon A Time In America* CD

Molotov Cocktail plays classic punk rock with a lot of attitude. Their music comes from being pissed off, broke, not drunk enough, annoyed by haters and whiners, and the frustration of being under someone's thumb. Their sound is similar to the angry punk from The Casualties or The Varukers, but they certainly play it their own way. Even though I'm not down with the exact sentiment of their stuff, everything they sing about makes sense and they generally speak to a relevant point. That's cool. LO (Eastern Threat/150 2nd St. #1A/New York, NY 10009)

## MORTE ASCETA • CD

Morte Asceta are from Brazil, and play politically oriented songs, in the vein of Discharge. This is very much rocking and distorted dis punk, with some random badass breakdowns too. There are some elements of other styles present also, but it all rocks none the less. They play in their native language, but luckily there are English translations for my whitewashed ass, and luckily this kicks my whitewashed ass too. CD (Vietnamita Records/C.P. 194/Curitiba-PR/80011-970/Brazil)

## MOTUS • *Razlike* CD

This band from Croatia plays metal influenced hardcore with a clean edge and a good dose of melody. It isn't thick and heavy, but crisp all around. So the metal vibe here is much older sounding. Though they sing in their native tongue, the lyrics are also translated into German and English. They describe people's lives and problems. It is as if they have looked around their town and talked about the bleak pictures of people's lives. It isn't hard to believe that what they describe here is the harsh reality of people in their country. For that alone, it is an interesting release. LO (Rade Preradovic-Hogar/11 Novoselski Odovojak 5/10040 Zagreb/Croatia)

## MUAD'DIB • *The Spark Marks The End* CD

First off, it was awesome to have this band make full use of their cool name. They could have loaded the CD up with *Dune* sound bytes and that would have been fine with me. The music here is angry metal hardcore with a crisp edge. Intricate guitar stands out as the main focal point of the sound. The lyrics confront political issues and personal confusion, all screamed out with what sounds like the last gasping breath. Muad'Dib is pretty good. LO (Benihana Recs./Cyriakring 57/38118 Braunschweig/Germany)



## THE NARTZ • Extended Play 7"

Irritatingly mid-paced mid-'80s hardcore from Germany that at times harkens Sean Brown-era Dag Nasty. Sadly, this is missing the all the key punches and intensity to stay memorable longer than it takes to make it through a side. At best this is a band that's still cursing our governing powers for being governing powers while searching out more meaning in life but still finding enough time to condemn girls for partying. Though voicing frustrations can be a healthy remedy for self-justification, as an art form it is like eating earwax. MM (Don't Wanna Hear It Records c/o Dennis Steinbach/Postfach 100915/31109 Hildesheim/Germany)

## NASH • Microcosmos CD

Ugh, it's too bad. Nash plays screamo with little direction and a poor recording. Sometimes it just doesn't work folks. The seven songs here are full of emotion and discord, but they are so fuzzy that it is hard to really enjoy listening. The blurry print job on the lyrics makes them difficult to read as well. Maybe next time, Nash. LO (sharpestblade@hotmail.com)

## THE NITZ • 7"

Open up the super punk cover (adorned with artwork of a skull riddled with nails) and you find that rock and roll meets hardcore on this record. The Nitz bring forth structured songs that ooze with intensity and the "fuck off" punk vibe. It isn't too surprising that a record with this mix of styles would come from Reptilian; the label that brings you the varied sounds of Pig Destroyer, The Dwarves, and Pg. 99. The Nitz play full bore with songs that thrash and crash. Very fun. LO (Reptilian Recs./403 S Broadway/Baltimore, MD 21231)

## NO CHOICE • Dry River Fishing CD

Starting off with a sample of George W. stating that "America is a peaceful nation" and that "nobody likes war in America" and then kicking into mid-tempo political punk, No Choice is pretty solid. The disc is catchy and very listenable, not to mention having readable, intelligent lyrics, which is sometimes too much to expect from punk bands. In a way, these guys remind me of Somerset, an ass-kicking band from Australia on Phyte Records, with their energy and well-played guitar-driven rock. Favorite tracks: "Dry River Fishing" (#4), "Scale Climbers Revenge" (#5), "Come My Hour" (#10) and "Wonderland" (#12). 12 songs, 38 minutes. DO (Newest Industry/Unit 100/61 Wellfield Rd./Cardiff/CF24 3DG/England; www.thenewestindustry.com)

## OHUZARU • Thrash Is Business 5"

Another example of a hardcore thrash band that would have enjoyed greater popularity, or recognition, had they been a US band. Ohuzaru were an Italian thrash outfit who kept their songs short and to the point. There's four quick bursts on this coaster. The vocals have a dry rasp, despite the slight high pitch. The music is quick with some choppy elements and some late '80s European thrash (Heresy, Ripcord, etc.—all the bands that today's Yank bands cite as influences) elements thrown in. Pretty damn good, and the tiny format guarantees a decent work out as you keep getting up to switch sides. Gotta keep fit for the pit! A couple of members are now in L'Amico di Martucci. MA (Marco Rapisanda/via Tommaso 41/30030 Scaltenigo (VE)/Italy; ohuzaru@hotmail.com)

## OIL • Better Get It In Your Soul 7"

Better get it in your garbage can. This is yet another generic melodic hardcore record. I don't like giving bad reviews, but I think this sucks. Again, I don't like melodic hardcore, and I shouldn't have reviewed this, because it may be a good record to someone who likes this stuff. DJ (Peter Walke Records/PO Box 14794/Albany, NY 12212)

## ORDER • Taep O-Dong CD

A little somethin' for the spiky bunch. It's as though Disorder came from Japan. This is actually a great disc. The music is mid tempo and packed with energy and well written songs. The guitar is dominant and the drums are great. Huge sound with tons of rolls and crashing cymbals. Up tha' punx! MA (H:G Fact/105 Nakano-Shinbashi-M/2-7-15 Yayoi-Cho/Nakano, Tokyo, 164-0013/Japan)

## ORGANIC • The Life And Times Of Sal Sage CD

Some bands just sort of play and see what happens. They give their best to the songs and play their heart out. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't—but it feels so real you can't help but like it. Organic is one of those bands. The local band you always want to support. They play melodic hardcore that varies in tempo but generally stays upbeat and catchy, just the right style to enjoy in any mood. A lot of their stuff has either a Hot Water Music or some variation of an Aaron Cometbus band sound. Most of their lyrics come from a personal perspective and try to give some kind of positive influence or romantic take on the world, even when writing about something inherently depressing. Bands like this are the underdogs, with broken strings and out of tune vocals. And you can't help but root for them. LO (\$8 to Microcosm Publishing/PO Box 14332/Portland, OR 97293)

## PORCELAIN GOD • Hometaping Is Killing Music CD

Apparently this was originally a cassette only release a little over twenty years ago. The whole thing, format and intent, was a response to the music industry and their campaign to stop home taping. This project fails though, because something like this is of no interest to the music industry on any level. Independent or corporate. Billy Syndrome (from The Pricks, an early NYC outfit that also featured Billy Rubin), teamed up with a couple other people and recorded some nonsensical songs on a home tape recorder. It might be interesting if you know the people in the band, but other than that maybe you will have more fun watching me smash this thing with my trusty hammer. MA (Slutfish/327 Bedford Ave. #A2/Brooklyn, NY 11211)

## PATARENI • Same CD

Eleven tracks of sick and brutal grind from this band. It took about six years to bring this recording to light, but their evil is ready to be unleashed upon this earth. The sound is heavy, polished, and full of unremitting metal guitar. I could care less about this, but it is done well. LO (Epistrophe Recording Co./PO Box 312/30003 Hannover/Germany)

## PATH OF DESTRUCTION • 7"

Path of Destruction plays four songs on this seven inch that are pretty much run of the mill hardcore tunes. It sounds like they listen to a lot of Tragedy and From Ashes Rise, and try to convey that when they play, but don't pull off the intensity. There is a guitar solo in the first song, "Liquid Vice," that is pretty choice, but it's not really long enough to bother strapping on an air guitar. I wonder how many people from their home town of Minnesota refer to them as P.O.D. and how pissed they get about it? MAH (Sin Fronteras/PO Box 8004/Minneapolis, MN 55408)

## PERE UBU • Slow Walking Daddy 7"

Sounds like shit my parents would listen to if they were really drunk. NW (Smogveil Records/316 California Ave. #207/Reno, NV 89509)

## PETROGRAD • Nine One One CD

I've never been much of a fan of Petrograd. Their intentions were good, but the music often wasn't. Most of the time, it was the problem of bringing too many varied styles into one song or record. This new CD does not suffer from that problem. In fact, it is quite cohesive. Petrograd plays smooth and poppy post punk that is still incredibly punk. Their individually political lyrics bring political discussion and the meaning of living to the forefront. The importance of these topics is highlighted by the vocals, illuminated by softly driving music. Sweet and seamless, many songs seem to be taking from the melodic DC style and traditional anarchist European protest style simultaneously. The booklet includes "The New War On Terrorism" essay from Noam Chomsky, complete lyrics and liner notes, and all writings in the booklet are printed in English and Spanish. LO (www.christophersrecords.com)

## PG. 99 • Document #11 7"

First of all, regardless of the number, this is not actually new material, but rather a combo repress of Documents #3 (the split with Reactor #7) and #4 (their tour 6"). They made a few changes (like replacing the original recording of "The Longer Now" with a slightly newer recording and removing the "Heathers" samples from the 6") and all the artwork, lyrics and objectionable material are missing as well. Actually, all the information has been replaced with a picture of a punk on the cover and a short note from the kid who put this out. I guess it's been like 4 years since these records came out, but I still liked hearing these songs. FIL (Robotic Empire/12001 Aintree Ln./Reston, VA 20191)

## PIRANHAS • CD

I've always been a sucker for garage rock, and the Piranhas do pretty well at it. Evolution from both the Japanese (Guitar Wolf) and American (The Mummies) garage greats can be heard in their music. The attitude shifts around, but there's always lots of it being spat out from solo and backing vocals. The upbeat fun of the sound is help even more by the successful incorporation of keyboards. I have to say I enjoyed listening to this CD. DF (On-On Switch/780 Post St. #54/San Francisco, CA 94109)

## PUTRESCINE • H2NCH2CH2CH2CH2NH2 CD

Putrescine plays a very intriguing hardcore rock on this CD. It has the highs and lows of modern chaotic hardcore with a strong sense of melody and song structure. Their lyrics are written with an intelligent vocabulary and sense of intrigue, which makes for good reading as the songs pass. Plus, the insert sports neo-cut and paste punk rock styling that is very 2K3. The six songs here pass by in under a half hour but it is just the right amount of time; just enough to enjoy. LO (3 Bay Hopper/PO Box 241709/Omaha, NE 68124)

## PRURIENT • The History Of Aids CD

This is noise. Crunching, biting, screeching, wailing, zapping, throbbing, zooming, grinding, beating, and moving noise. Most of this CD is harsh enough that only the true noise fans will dig it, but there are some more atmospheric moments for us novices as well. When vocals are used, they are layered under much distortion and electronic effects. You can, however, read along as they go. The lyrics used come from a thirteenth century Persian poet. They fit well; which is especially interesting when you consider the notion of two times conjoining (not unlike the many sounds conjoined here). LO (Armageddon Label/PO Box 56/Providence, RI 02909)

## RESIST & EXIST • Insurrectionist Deed CD

Three new songs from Resist & Exist, blazing forward with their anarcho-punk message. The first one has a long melodic intro before they bring out the big guns. Though this band often sounds like Crass, in this recording they move into a heavier metal sound with a lot of intense guitar solos. In them they discuss the politics of the underground, seeing your parents (and their struggles) in yourself, and political prisoners. As always, their messages are sincere. LO (http://mediattack.digitalbomb.com)

## RIISTERROR • Taabajara Hardcore 7"

This is what happens when you take a veteran Finnish hardcore band and fuse them with some young(er) bloods. Fast and thrashy with simplistic (not at all in a bad way) lyrics in Portuguese. Multiple vocalists shouting and screaming lyrics about religion and government frustration, and one bastard combination of a band laying down the jams and driving the good times on. This is one of the best thrash type releases I have heard recently, which isn't surprising seeing as how it is two awesome bands fused into one. CF (Fight Records/Hikivuoventkatu 17 D 36/33710 Tampere/Finland)

## RIZZUDO • CD

In the seven songs on this CD, Rizzudo fuses indie and keyboards in a quirky fashion. Super spacey electronica with a childish flair meets with traditional indie guitar riffs and familiar melodies. Keyboards reign supreme as the overpowering trait of the music, but not so much as to force Rizzudo into the new wave category. Rizzudo is silly fun, sort of like a Nintendo game soundtrack. LO (rizzudo@earthlink.net)

## THE ROGERS SISTERS • Purely Evil CD

The Rogers Sisters is a three-piece that plays poppy and fun rock. Much of this CD reminds me of X, especially when the songs come together in catchy choruses. Still, since this is a Troubleman release, a slight element of experimental new wave runs through this recording as well. The Rogers Sisters are interesting, and very reminiscent of late seventies/early eighties sultry new wave/punk. LO (Troubleman Unlimited)

## ROBOT ATTACK • Demo No. Three Point Zero! 7"

Metal embellished hardcore that, while solid and tuneful, doesn't wander far from the path of the genre so unfortunately named "screamo." The music does have a great deal of character, though, and it is played competently—whether or not this is a demo, it would be logical to assume this is at least an early recording, and should the band stick together, theirs could be a bright future. Another element that pushes this record over the top however, is the amount of effort put into creative and personal packaging: no less than five colors hand-screened on the cover; a packet of photos of the band; vinyl stickers; paper stickers; lyric booklet; how to put out a record; a breakdown of the budget of the label that put this out; and other errata—the entire execution seems very youthfully sincere and enthusiastic. The lyrics aren't amazing, but express strong DIY ethics and a critique of technology, both of which get hearty thumbs-up from this grumpy old reviewer. TS (Square of Opposition Records/2935 Fairview St./Bethlehem, PA 18020)

## RADAR SECRET SERVICE • Stop Communication CD

Radar Secret Service plays new wave punk in an early style. So much of this CD sounds like Joy Division, I cannot help but be intrigued. Even the vocal effects are similar. Obscurely poetic lyrics hint at ideas and feelings, while the music tweaks around it in the background. The sound is upbeat and strange, as the songs beat out familiar rhythms bathed in affection. LO (On-On Switch/780 Post St. #54/San Francisco, CA 94109)

## RAKSASAS • Bleed for What It's Worth CD

More German hardcore here, this time with a bit more high-end in the guitars, which I appreciate. Raksasas take a sort of poetic misery approach in their songs, and the lyrics are uttered in tones that vary between spoken and growled. Looks like they put some time into things and I'd say justice was done to the Minor Threat cover that they chose to include. I liked this more than the average record that I reviewed this time around. DF (Stephan Moller/Winzenburgerstrabe 12/31061 Altfred/Germany)

## THE SADDEST LANDSCAPE • Cover Your Heart 7"

Though the first song sounds like it is straight out of the French hardcore scene of the mid-nineties, most of this record has a modern emo hardcore vibe. The sentimentality and emotional frailty is turned up to eleven here. Members of this band were also in The Last Forty Seconds, so you can expect a slight dusting of chaos amidst the melodic vibe. Poor guys, they seem to heartbroken... and this 7" is the embodiment of that feeling. It is done well. LO (www.coptercrash.com)

## SCALENE • Grafting From Instantaneous and Fragmental... CD

What in the fuck is this title supposed to be referring to? Until someone tells me, I'm making it my official monthly submission to www.engrism.com as the most pompous and incoherently stupid thing I've ever heard. Musically, this is dark, Japanese mid-paced emo-tech-metal wishing it was Deaguy or Kiss it Goodbye. But without the fury and ability of having ex-Rorschach members to make it all work, this is a contrived laugh that fails to be taken seriously. A real disappointment from an assumed consistent label. MM (HG Fact/105 Nakano Sinbashi-M/2-7-15 Yayoi-Cho/Nakano/Tokyo 164-0013/Japan)

## SCATTERED FALL • For All I've Lost 7"

Sincere but generically snotty east-bay inspired punk. Unprovoking but in no way terrible, it's a listen that goes by with little consideration of what went into it, inevitably pointing out the observation Scattered Falls' musical influences couldn't be all that interesting either. Starter punk. MM (\$4 to Deadpan Records c/o Ron/PO Box 902/Artesia, CA 90702)

## SCORNEO • This Mad Endeavor 12"

Self released on Scorneo Records, this is one crust as fuck slab of wax. And might I add that the marbled gray vinyl looks really cool too. Scorneo, from Minneapolis, Minnesota, plays straight up political crust in the Fleas And Lice vein with awesome sounding vocals. Their lyrics are about mankind's destruction of the earth, fake punks who fuck up the scene, and being a slave to your job. Really good lyrics and high energy on this record; pick it up! DJ (PO Box 8172/Minneapolis, MN 55408)

## SECOND COMBAT • One More Fight EP CD

I'm pretty stoked on Malaysian Hardcore. Just the fact that it exists is inspiring. This particular straightedge quintet offers up four of their own songs and one Ignite cover. The Pagans-esque vocals are in English, and so are the lyrics. The songs have some sincere angst and some posi points as well like, "What once said to make things better/Is to learn to stay together." The sound is fairly thrashy and lo-fi. I would've been into some element that made it more uniquely Malaysian (like the inclusion of some local instrument) but as Steve aptly pointed out, I am probably not the intended audience. DF (Sober Records c/o Awirth/PO Box 288/53800 Gombak/Kuala Lumpur/Malaysia)



## THE SECRET CHANNEL • 7"

If during the course of music history a soulless approach to college rock has ever become synonymous with the word LAME, it is by now nothing more than a total redundancy to suffer through hearing more of it. Fusing predictable three-chord progressions with tuneless vocals are the simple bats in their belfry, coming off as little more than a futile shot at social stardom through well-worn rock clichés (example: copywriting generic song titles). There is some intensity waiting dormant here, wishing it could explode, as they seem to willingly be restraining themselves to present a feeling of agonized self-containment, but with a lack of gusto, these guys and gal instead sound like they slept their way through their recording session. Fucking play from your fucking guts! MM (www.thesechannel.com)

## SHARON STONED • Make An Effort... Right Now! CDep

Sharon Stoned? Ha! Anyway, they are a band that plays old school, thrashing hardcore with a relentless beat. These nine songs come from a live set. The recording isn't too bad—it certainly captures the crazy feeling of what this band must be like live. The songs are about conformity in the scene, being angry about rape, and having a good time. Plus, they cover Minor Threat, Negative Approach, and Void. Thrash it up. LO (Youth Crime Records/Jiji/No. 43 Jalan Berjaya 1/Taman Berjaya/68100 Batu Caves/Selangor/Malaysia)

## SIGNAL TO TRUST • Folklore CD

You know all of those bands from Kent, Ohio? The bazillion groups that share the same nine people? Well, Signal To Trust sounds like the band they formed, recorded, and decided it wasn't all that good. The eight tracks on Folklore bear resemblance to "New" Terror Class (minus the terror) and Party of Helicopters (minus the party). Don't get me wrong, this is not a horrible album, but if you took it home in test form, your mom isn't going to put it on the fridge. MAH (Modern Radio Record Label/PO Box 8886/Minneapolis, MN 55408)

## SILVER TONGUED DEVIL • We Are The Road Crew 7"

It's not just the cover art that is reminiscent of Motorhead here... These songs were originally supposed to be released on a tribute CD, but now they exist as a limited edition 7". Silver Tongued Devil does Motorhead's "(We Are) The Road Crew" and AC/DC's "Have A Drink On Me" on this record. Their insert is a collage of reviews, flyers, and photos from the band. LO (Rob Tabachka/10 Victory Ln./Leetsdale, PA 15056)

## SOME GIRLS • The Rains 7"

This is a one sided 7" on the very hyped Deathwish Records. This record didn't really do too much for me until I heard the last song which had some good, fast riffs in it. Vocally, this stuff reminds me of Orchid a little bit. Musically, it's straight ahead hardcore with kind of a bad drum sound. Not bad for this band's first effort. If I'm not mistaken, the artwork for the cover is ripped off from a great British photographer named Bob Carlos Clark. I love the artist. The layout looks great. NW (Deathwish/432 Morris Ave./Providence, RI 02909)

## SONG OF ZARATHUSTRA • A View From High Tides CD

By the third song it's evident that Song of Zarathustra have mastered their art. The utter complexities and harmonies interwoven in these songs are far less about what has brought them to this point in their existence than what they're capable of showing us now. Those who've followed their previous releases will know what I mean when I say they've since opted for the more subdued approach without the cost of overall effectiveness. Fans of Camera Obscura should have already known this before there was even a Camera Obscura. MM (Troubleman Unlimited/16 Willow/Bayonne, NJ 07002)

## SPLITTING TEETH • Don't Believe the Hype 7"

This is a fun record. Super-energetic thrash core! Good lyrics about kids in the scene, killing frat boys, and vengeance upon asshole-type people. This has an old-school sound to it and it rocks in an Infest/blues rock sort of way. Buy it! DJ (Havoc/PO Box 8585/Minneapolis, MN 55408)

## STANDSTILL • The Ionic Spell CD

The Ionic Spell is a full-bodied, emotive hardcore record. The urgency reminds me of Saeia while the artful nature hints of Monochrome. The sound seems to explode in a perfectly tailored way; it does not lose focus. This is the kind of all around complete release emo rockers are longing for. Standstill makes an especially good soundtrack for making food or reading 'zines. Originally release by BCore in Spain, Level Plane has imported this sound for a new audience that will probably eat it up. LO (Level Plane/PO Box 4329/Philadelphia, PA 19118)

## SMACKDOWN • 7"

Smackdown's motto is "wrestling is real, everything else is fake" and if you're a disbeliever then they've got seven tracks... excuse me, seven "matches" to bust your head and smash your face. Fast and brutal with plenty of bravado and showmanship, Smackdown are utilizing a traditional '80s style hardcore to back them up in their tag team battle to get everyone moshing some shit up. KM (Coalition/Newtonstraat 212/2562 KW Den Haag/The Netherlands)

## STILLBORN • 7"

This is a new band from Minneapolis with six songs of fast punk leaning. This band reminds me of older peace/anarcho punk type bands with the way the lyrics are long and have a lot to say. Shouted by two vocalists this also reminds me in a way of Protestera or Operation. While the lyrics are good the drumming seemed strained and lacking and the production somewhat thin. I think that this could be a really good record but would be a better demo. Not bad stuff but nothing that really grabbed me either. CF (New Audio Terror/PO Box 8024/Minneapolis, MN 55408)

## SNOTTY • Short & Quick & Love one-sided LP

Thrash? Pop punk? Whatever it is, it's got "eclectic" written all over it; perhaps I might venture to say it makes me want to say, "Minutemen meets Huggy Bear meets The Futures." Fracture also comes to mind. At any rate, while the name is appropriate, it's also a bad name, but at least the packaging is attractive: two-color hand-screened 12" envelope. The non-content side of the LP is etched, ala Palatka's End of Irony LP. No lyric sheet, however, so the world will never know just what it is that has these folks so riled up. TS (Hermit Records/PO Box 309/Leeds, LS2 7AH/UK; www.hermitrecords.co.uk)

## STRAIGHT TO YOUR... BRAIN • Swingers. Winos... CD

Phew, eighteen songs in half an hour! The thrash tempo and crazed style of Straight To Your... Brain has some good moments, but it was the lyrics that kept me interested. Their witty social commentary and biting satire strikes the right chord. Sometimes the song titles (like "I Had This Crazy Dream Last Night That George W. Bush Became President Even Though More People Voted For That Other Asshole") are a little better than the actual songs, but that isn't too bad either. The recording isn't that great, but the band is also a little sloppy. Most of their songs just sort of go crazy and throw a lot of energy at you. That can work out well, but in this case it is just okay. LO (Almost Good Music/PO Box 2233/Fond Du Lac, WI/54936)

## STRONG INTENTION • Extermination Vision CD

Damn. Brutal hardcore from this Maryland, USA hardcore band. In the same vein as Infest or Siege; straight up, powerful, and fast hardcore that is very heavy and unforgiving. Fourteen tracks in all. Blazing from start to finish! Really good stuff. Apparently Strong Intention has been around for something like eight years, but I've never really payed any attention to them before. I would certainly recommend this to anyone into fast, harsh, '80s style hardcore. KM (Coalition/Newtonstraat 212/2562 KW Den Haag/The Netherlands)

## THE THEORY OF ABSTRACT LIGHT • CD

The nine recordings on this CD are the solo project of Ben Carr, guitarist of Five. The music seeps out in atmospheric and trippy bundles. They are space and light, with lots of loaded effects. Much of it sounds like a science fiction soundtrack. The Theory Of Abstract Light moves from piece to piece seamlessly as it fills the room. LO (Odd Halo Recordings/PO Box 5359/Gloucester, MA 01930)

## THUMBS UP • Building An Army 7"

Okay, I'm really not so into the name. That's kinda bothered me since day one of hearing it. The vocals on this remind me of Born Against or Hail Mary in a strange way. I do think these guys rule when they keep the speed up, but there are some "new school" metallic mosh parts that I'm not all that into. Doesn't sound like your typical Western Mass stuff. Five songs on this 7". I'm sure these guys will grow. NW (Rodent Popsicle Records/PO Box 1143/Allston, MA 02134)

## TITO'S BOJS • Electro Istra CD

This Croatian band plays melodic punk in a classic style. The songs are vocally driven, with plenty of guitar hooks to pull you in. They seem to be taking clues from old school punk and largely popular pop punk when constructing their songs. The CD recording sounds good and the CD booklet looks nice. All text in their mother tongue. LO (Humanitia Nova/Bolnicka 96/10000 Zagreb/Croatia)

## TO THE ANSPHONE • 7"

Two keyboards, one synthesizer (aren't they the same as keyboards?), two basses, one guitar, one drum and vocals result in a hyperactive chaotic experiment. The chorus of "Anachronistic State of Mind" is pretty rocking, but there may be a little more modern music synth in the songs than is absolutely necessary. The second side of the record starts off with an instrumental track, "Iguana" that sounds like it could be a bonus track on an '80s goth-pop record by Peter Murphy or something. Not all bad, to tell the truth. "J(ustify) O(bjects) E(mpire)" follows up with some UFO sound effects integrated needlessly into an otherwise decent San Diego-style rock jam, giving way to "Subliminal Message at 00:32," which is more beeps and whistles. No lyric sheet or worthwhile band information rounds out this not entirely memorable experience. DO (Heroine/c/o Boris Battistini/via Galilei 6/47020 Montiano (FC)/Italy; www.heroinerecords.com)

## TODIEFOR • Virusinfectioncontrol CD

Seems these guys must've had a broken space bar on their keyboard when they were typing out this CD's layout on their PC. What gives with all the connected words? Ugh! What a very contemporary flop to assume one can spice up a boring band name or title by making it harder to read. Todiefor are a more technical version of The Swarm with shouted choruses, occasional spoken parts, and a very thick digital-sounding recording. Nice use of sound effects to add density and atmosphere, but it's the throaty harshness of the vocals that prove to be their saving grace. MM (Heroine Records/PO Box 35/47023 Cesena/Italy)

## A TRILLION BARNACLE LAPSE • CD

The screamy background vocals layered with the spoken-sung vocals in the foreground are like Current or Bob Tilton, but the electronics and monotonous guitars leave something to be desired. Sometimes I almost get into it, but other times the shrill guitars sound more like a modem or fax machine than rock music, not to mention that there is no low end to speak of. Most songs are revolving around machines, robots and appliances, so I guess it all makes sense in the end. Interesting, but not something that captures my attention for the moment... may have some growth potential with future listens, at any rate. 10 songs, 40 minutes. DO (Level Plane/PO Box 4329/Philadelphia, PA 19118)

## TUSK • Get Ready CD

Tusk brings down the house with nine tracks of grindcore fury. Their sound is modern, smooth, and electronic as they blast out the beats. Their lyrics range from the interesting to the odd, fitting well with the mix of sounds you can find here. Tusk is grindcore for screamo fans and hardcore kids of the new age. LO (He Who Corrupts/196 Fairfield/Elmhurst, IL 60126)

## UNFAIR? • Destroy Sexism CDep

Unfair dedicates this collection of songs to the struggle for equality and liberation between the sexes. They play mostly anarcho-punk rock influenced by '80s peace punk though elements of melodious emotive hardcore come into play as well. The songs are highly melodic and structured so that the vocals are in the forefront. They also do a cover of The Mob's "Another Day, Another Death." LO (http://mediatack.digitalbomb.com)

## THE VETS • CD

The Vets play well-built rock and roll from the post-hardcore style. Songs are based on melody and effect, creating layers to ponder and grooves to fall in. Though it is played well, I'm not particularly passionate about this style. LO (Modern Radio Record Label/PO Box 8886/Minneapolis, MN 55408)

## VODKA JUNIORS • All Them Clowns CD

Eight upbeat punk anthems with a poppy beat. They sound good throughout these songs, as they play a melodic and harsh set of songs. Vodka Juniors has a message of resistance and hope, which gives their sound and extra edge. The CD comes with a nice booklet wherein the lyrics are printed as part of a comic. It looks really nice and gives a nice creative touch to the whole project. LO (PO Box 52817/N Eritrea 14671/Athens/Greece)

## WAXWING • Nobody Can Take What Everybody Owns CD

The newest (and perhaps last) full length from Waxwing combines the best elements of raw indie rock. Driving guitar melodies, poignant breakdowns, and raw lyrics. Were it not for the hoarse voice of Rocky Votolato, this CD would be much less interesting. The rawer the rock, the more open I am to the personal statements they wail about. Very few indie inspired rocking bands of today elicit sympathy from me, but I'll make an exception for this collection of songs. LO (Second Nature/PO Box 11543/Kansas City, MO 64138)

## WESTERN SKY • CD

This handmade release holds all kinds of special treasures. Finely crafted booklets with homemade transparencies and 'zine-like art make sure that you understand their medium is a large part of their message. Western Sky speaks in manifestos. They wish to live, to inspire, to change, and to share. Their revolutionary art ideas remind me of the words in the Wolves LP that speaks to the same goal—art for all of our sakes. Western Sky has a crashing hardcore melody throughout most of their songs which, again, reminds me of Wolves. These four songs ride the highs and lows of sound with much emotion and honesty. This is a very modern and highly likeable DIY release. LO (\$6 to Brady Hatton/552 Maple St./Manchester, NH 03104)

## WET CONFETTI • Policia De La Educacion CD

Wet Confetti takes a multi-styled approach that makes for a more stylized rock. They take emo stylings, electric keyboard beats, hardcore guitar, and indie change-ups and mash them into their songs. What you get is a structured amalgamation that is pleasant and soft on the ears. LO (www.greydayproductions.com)

## WITCH HUNT • 7"

Co-released by Get the Axe and Hemmhoraging Loudnes. This record has high energy, raw sound, and vocals about the oppression of women, patriotism, and war/9-11. This kicks ass. Witch Hunt plays hardcore/crust punk with intense female vocals, and the melodies contain a sense of desperation and agony. I'll bet they totally rock live. Get this, or be a square!! DJ (Get The Axe/PO Box 3019/Oswego, NY 13126)

## THE WOLFNOTE • Dancing to a Rhythm... CD

A poor-man's Blood Brothers from Canada: equally grating but less compelling, even if they're attempting to be just as pretentious. Haphazard musical structures seemingly cut and paste together songs with the precision of a butter knife. Dual snotty vocals offset the noodley guitar licks before a cappella breakdowns appear out of left field only to add further weight to the thought that this is all too reminiscent of something better. It's when you realize they're singing songs called "Car Crash Gift Certificate" and "The Kissing Bandit Meets the Lipstick Thief" that one can easily conclude it takes no artisan to know this painting is little more than a shameless forgery. There are reasons why there is only one label called Three One G. MM (www.thewolfnote.com)

## ZEROID • 2001-2002 CD

Zeroid combines the atmospheric brutality of Neurosis with the crunching reality of a good crust band. Their music is heavy and filling, each song a new layer of mud until you are almost completely buried in the sound. This CD has the tracks from a previously released LP and 10", as well as a live track and some noise sequences. LO (Unsociable Recs./PO Box 105824/28058 Bremen/Germany)

## HAVAISTYS/EFFIGY • split 7"

Havaistys plays some pretty generic hardcore via Finland. The recording is not all that great and I think kills this. They seem to be playing crusty hardcore but I can't really figure it out. Effigy, I also think, suffer from a bad recording. They play mosh with kind of grind vocals. Effigy is from Japan. NW (Whisper in the Darkness/PO Box 40113/Portland, OR 97240)



## SIX REASONS TO KILL/ABSIDIA • split CD

When I listen to metal, I want to be left completely destroyed. Like the first time I heard Nile's *Amongst the Catacombs* LP. The memory is kinda hazy, but when I woke up, the record was over, I had a bloody nose, and my room was on fire. Six Reasons to Kill doesn't deliver that intense of an ass whooping session with their four tracks. There might be a few noogies, maybe even a headbutt or two, but they fall way short of a TKO. The screamed vocals and squealing guitars are right on, but the low end vocals lack the evilness they desperately need. There is also way too many chugga hardcore elements thrown into the cauldron. Absidia, however, is a totally different story. If these four Germans shot guns with the precision that they dish out sick metal, then Charleston Heston would be penning a resignation letter post haste. Absidia's three tracks could power a tank with enough juice to run over Morser and Systral and only be slightly in the dust of forefathers At The Gates and Carcass. This split is definitely worth picking up for their songs, and the amazing artwork. MAH (Per Koro/PO Box 102514/28025 Bremen/Germany)

## CORRUPTED/INFAUST • split 7"

Corrupted bring another sludge-o-rama to the ears of loyal fans worldwide. Though short in comparison to the epics on other full lengths, their songs here drag you through the mud for a good five minutes. It describes the dystopia modern man has helped create and the unavoidable trap we have set for ourselves; which is pretty well suited to the thick and ominous sounds you find here. Corrupted has become well known for their intensely thick brutality, and this record is no different. Infaust follows suit with spine crunching hardcore that hangs eerie in the air. The song drones and blasts in pleasing ways. Their lyrics describe a bleak landscape where choice and opinion no longer come into play. The mood here fits well with the sound, and Infaust create a full sphere to close their listeners into. This release is very well suited to the Blind Date label. LO (Blind Date/Marcel Wieghaus/PO Box 700104/79055 Freiburg/Germany)

## TENVOLTSOCK/NEIGHBOUR ROSICKY • split 7"

Tenvoltsock fire off bass heavy rumblings with relentlessly solid snare/high hat interplay as the Swing Kids-esque guitar flies all over the neck like a bomb fuse ignited as soon as the needle touches the vinyl. Theirs is a chemistry drenched with hooks and volatile energy, too bad for them this isn't still 1995. Neighbour Rosicky utilize The Strokes approach to production with clean guitars and slightly distorted crooning vocals that dominate the mix to the point of frustration. It is the utter lightness of their sappy keyboard melodies that hearken nightmares of a reincarnated Steely Dan sent to torment our world and remind us why we have so much to be fucking pissed off at in life. Immediately provoking me for a headfirst plunge to the power button on my stereo, I lunged with such a voracity for survival and sanity that I thankfully only broke a few fingers upon impact. MM (David Blumann/Engelbertstr. 44/50674 Cologne/Germany)

## A LIFE ONCE LOST/ THE FOURTH PLAGUE FLIES • split 7"

Behold the new wave of emo-metal. Chugga chugga with odd riffs and screaming vocals, the band with an excessively long name plays music fit for an Orange county SxE show. While this is not my style it is pretty good, although the whining about her or she subjects and heartbreak and pretty poetic lyrics I find obnoxious I can't really dis because I cannot be the dictator of art because a lot of kids are probably into these guys, just not my crusty grind loving ass. CF (Deathwish/432 Morris Ave./Providence, RI 02909)

## LOOKS LIKE RAIN/THE INFAMOUS • split 7"

The Infamous have four pissed off songs here. The tempo is quick and the hardcore is straightforward. No gimmicks, this is just straight up hardcore with a thrash edge. Raw and lively, The Infamous are pretty good. Looks Like Rain plays songs that are the soundtrack to their autobiography. Their songs are about being in a band, respecting each other in the scene, teaching the drunks a lesson in the pit, making sure your band/project has a message, and other such inter-scene issues. I wonder if it occurs to them how much of their band's message is about their band. I'm not calling it an ego problem, just an interesting thing to note. Anyway, Looks Like Rain sort of remind me of Rain On The Parade (or maybe it is just because I cannot get the name association out of my head). They play in your face hardcore with a youth crew edge. It is tough and unforgiving, just the way folks like it. LO (Grave Mistake Recs. c/o Alex/1635 Generals Hwy/Annapolis, MD 21401)

## FUN 100/THE HAND • split CD

Appropriately named, Fun 100 kick out some dam entertaining jams here. In their four songs that give you some synth pop, '70s punk, fun rock and roll, and a little electronic party. Good stuff. The Hand change directions entirely by throwing out fast and crazy hardcore. Their sound could easily be described as screamo with the furious coming together of voice and guitar. At times, the toss in a Song Of Zarathustra-esque keyboard part just before they go back to the chaos. Not too shabby all around. LO (Ambulance Recordings/35275 Selkirk Ave./Abbotsford, BC/V3G 1A5/Canada)

## SMALL BROWN BIKE/CASKET LOTTERY • CD

This is not a split; it is a conglomeration of six new songs from the two bands. They each play one full song as the regular bands they are, but they also include two songs where they sing to other's music, and two more odd creations. The one that sounds like a really polished Small Brown Bike song (that The Casket Lottery sings) is my favorite on here. Of course, there is also the "Under Pressure" cover, which is amusing in its own way. LO (Second Nature Records/PO Box 11543/Kansas City, MO 64138)

## IMPRACICAL COCKPIT/COUNTY Z • split 7"

Impractical Cockpit play messy, K Records inspired, garage rock that has that love it or hate it quality. Their three songs are recorded live, which doesn't really help their case in the mind of this reviewer. In my opinion, they need all the help they can get to make their jangly and raw songs sound like art. County Z comes out with some equally quirky rock. I enjoyed this more, though probably only due to the violin and female vocals. With its seemingly incoherent lyrics and spouted vocal delivery, their sound seems to be more performance art than music (as it is normally defined). It reminded me of Mecca Normal. LO (\$3.50 to Raw Sugar/PO Box 53011/New Orleans, LA 70153)

## HOLDING ON/COALITION • split 7"

Holding On plays some very generic Youth Crew stuff with tons of chants and screamed choruses. The kind of stuff you've come to expect from this Midwest straight-edge band. Coalition is the newest in the message board bands... fast, hardcore with Youth Crew parts, and tons of snazzy mosh parts thrown in. The vocals are really the only thing I find interesting. More typical personal lyrics about "lies" and "standing strong." NW (Martyr Records/PO Box 955/Harriman, NY 10926)

## HOT WATER MUSIC/ THE CASKET LOTTERY • split 7"

At first, I was confused why this The Casket Lottery song didn't seem particularly pretentious or soft—but then I realized that they are doing a Government Issue cover. While perhaps disgusting to the diehard Government Issue fans (or anyone around in the '80s) this is one of the better songs from The Casket Lottery. I wish all their stuff sounded like this. When Hot Water Music covers "Jaded Eyes" it seems a lot more like a song they might play. It has definitely been interpreted through the ears (and beards) of these hard rocking melody makers. Since the songs they cover were from a good band to begin with and not played with any particularly bad modification, this split is good. Certainly better than that Embrace covers comp, but that isn't too hard to top. LO (Second Nature/PO Box 11543/Kansas City, MO 64138)

## LINE OF DESCENT/ SCOTT BAILO'S ARMY • split LP

Scott Baio's Army is the kind of fun loving, politically correct, self-effacing thrash band that you can really appreciate. With fast punk ala Charles Bronson, this band gets under your skin. Their songs are quick, punchy, and harsh. It is in the lyrics and the sound bytes that you really get a feel for the attitude that makes them appealing. There is evil thrash and then there is good hearted thrash. Scott Baio's Army is the latter and that works really well. Line Of Descent plays harsh hardcore with a biting melody just under the surface. At times, of extreme crunching and wailing, they remind me of From Ashes Rise. Line Of Descent creates tidal waves of sound that crash down upon you with much fury. Their political lyrics speak of freeing yourself from the confines and concepts of the modern world. It is good stuff. LO (Paco Garden Recs./PO Box 18455/Denver, CO 80218)

## GREAT CLEARING OFF/ SOUND OF FAILURE • Sea of Steel Vol. 2 split 7"

The review gods... well, Lisa at least, has smiled on me once again. I reviewed GCO's debut 7" last quarter, and am ecstatic to receive another dose of their uniquely complex and melodic hardcore. Think somewhere between the Fuel sound on the Angry Son split, and Palatka's *End Of Irony* LP, and throw in some tastefully accomplished metal leads here and there to spice things up a bit more, and you'll have fairly good idea of their sound. Lyrical content is on par with the musical quality—political, passionate, and sincere. The Great Clearing Off is a great up-and-coming band, and one I'll definitely be keeping an eye on. Sound of Failure has a fast and heavy sound with anthemic riffing and great throaty, well-screamed vocals. Their sound is a little more generic, however, and the lyrics are sparse and vague, yet in the end they are quite competent in the execution department, and—sonically at least—kick a lot of ass. All told, this disc is quite the keeper. TS (Ed Walters Records/2416 South Warnock St/Philadelphia, PA 19148; www.edwaltersrecords.org)

## SEVEN FEET FOUR/ THE FLYING WORKER • split 7"

Seven Feet Four are floating in the same boat as Massachusetts's Wolves, mutually riding out the same tip Universal Order of Armageddon or any likewise Tony Joy endeavor patterned in the '90s. Shouted, semi-spoken vocals punch in atop simplistic but well-conceived arrangements of the exact kinds of discordant melodies that one might expect. In the end, it is the drummer that makes them badass and ties their whole package together. The Flying Worker, however, are an Orchid-worship type of concoction and generally come off as a more chaotic and moody version of Seven Feet Four. However, it is The Flying Worker's over reliance on the well-established interlude/explosion pattern defines and utterly exemplifies why this whole genre tends to be almost as longwinded and overwrought as this review. MM (Puzzle Records/Highes Le Corre/4, Cite d'Aleth/35000 Rennes/France)

## NOSTROMO/BLOCKHEADS • split 7"

First off, totally cool artwork. Just by looking at the cover, I was thinking I was getting a record from Estrus. Boy, was I wrong. It's a whole different world once you cue up this record. Nostromo, from Switzerland, and the Blockheads, from France, each do an original and then they both trade a cover of one of each other's songs. Blockheads play straight up thrash with an occasional mosh breakdown. Combo of both growling and screaming voice make for some brutal stuff. Nostromo plays thrash with screamo voice. Lyrics dealing with a fucked up society, genocide, and death along with it's killer soundtrack make for a powerful EP. I like it. JG (Shogun/39 Rue Du Mont D'Arene/51100 Reims/France)

## DROP DEAD/TOTALITAR • split CD

A crushing split from two intense bands... Drop Dead gives you blasting punk songs overflowing with energy. Their steel precision and grinding backbone create monstrous noise that hits all the right targets. Pissed off and hoping for a future, Drop Dead deliver six news songs. Totalitar keep the energy going with three songs. They deliver exactly what you would want and expect from Swedish thrash. Exceptionally useful and pointed, these songs fly by quickly. LO (Prank Records/PO Box410892/San Francisco, CA 94141)

## OVERMARS/DONE FOR • In The Arms Of Octopus split CD

Overmars beat out three brutal songs here. They keep it slow a heavy, layering the rock on like molasses. Strained, screaming lyrics eek out over the heavy guitars just enough to pass on an air of desperation and frenzy. Done For play intense hardcore with a slight metal edge. Their hints of melody and moments of soft harmony are merely the quiet before the storm. Done For rages on for four songs here, playing hardcore with an unforgiving bite. This accumulation of harsh sounds comes together well. The lyrics for this CD are in French in English. LO (Overmars/21 Grande Rue De La Guillotiere/69007 Lyon/France)

## FUNERAL DINER/ZANN • split 7"

Zann fills the room with their chaotic, energetic, and heavy hardcore. Their sound is modern and complex in that great way. Existential lyrics in both songs help this complexity along, and the band seems to have a nicely defined singularity. Funeral Diner are a band from California that people seem to be just discovering, though if they were on the East Coast I'm sure they would already be huge. They play intensely moving hardcore with a lot of layers and emotion. Funeral Diner is rough and edgy. Their stormy clouds rarely give break to sunshine but when they do it is cool. The vocals scream along with the sound without ever taking front seat. All of these aspects come together to make highly listenable music that you can just have on repeat for hours without noticing. LO (Vendetta Records/Berliner Str. 29/13189 Berlin/Germany)

## xCANAAANX/ THIRTY SECONDS TO ARMAGEDDON • split 7"

Sometimes it's pretty hard to understand what bands are trying to say with their music. With xCanaanx and Thirty Seconds To Armageddon it's pretty blatant. The message is "please mosh! pleecease!" Both bands try way to hard, but neither have what it takes to get me out of the lounging position. I listened to the xCanaanx side of this split first and was kind of impressed with the vocals and guitar work, but both of their songs faded out at the end. Is there anything that can suck the brutality out of a room quicker than a fucking fade out? They have this semi-brutal sing a long part at the end of their side, but it faded out, and so did my interest. Thirty Seconds To Armageddon does pretty much the same stuff on their side... Okay, the EXACT same stuff. It basically sounds like the same band, but at least they don't sport the fade outs. The recording quality is pretty damn good, and if you are into stuff that Ferret and Equal Vision release, then you should check this out. MAH (Ignition Records/1 Chandos Rd./Tumbridge Wells/Kent/TN1 2NY/UK)

## RACEBANNON/ SONG OF ZARATHUSTRA • split CD

It's been a while since I've reviewed any Racebannon releases. Partly due to the fact that I forced them on other people and partly that they once included a note asking that I not review anymore their stuff. Well, ha ha, we are back for another round! To their credit, this is the most cohesive Racebannon recording I have heard. All elements of the insane have been tossed aside for the elements of the freaky. The four songs here range from trippy noise to straight up noise. Long, droning selections are layered under drippy lyrics and the occasional catchy beat. The two songs here, each with two versions, cover the full spectrum of Racebannon's latest style and probably most enjoyable when high. Song Of Zarathustra have three songs here; each of them incredibly catchy and full of bite. They remind me most of that killer intro song from their "Birth Of Tragedy" album. The approach of hardcore laced in keyboards and strong vocals works well for them. LO (Backroad Records/20260 Fieldstone Crossing/Goshen, IL 46528)

## PROPAGANDHI/CRUA CUERVOS • live split CD

Five live songs from both bands, recorded in France. By now everyone and their mother should know that Propagandhi plays very fast, often imitated, never duplicated, political "pop punk." Unlike NOFX, Pennywise and even Bad Religion, the "punk" far outweighs the "pop" and their crusades for animal rights and TRUE history are of much greater concern to them than radio airplay. This has garnered them a worldwide following, and while their French friends in Cria Cuervos seem to have similarly rabid fans, they would be wise to avoid playing their cover of Chubby Checker's "The Twist," and concentrate on the political rock. This release is mostly for existing fans, rather than a starting point for your Propagandhi collection. Not a bad production for a live CD, with plenty of energy and still clear enough to differentiate between guitars and hat hats. 10 songs, 21 minutes. DO (Diabolik/BP 4/94111 Arcueil cedex/France; www.dbkl.fr.st)

## CAUSTIC CHRIST/INTENSE YOUTH! • split 7"

Caustic Christ features members of Aus Rotten playing crust with a fast, early hardcore edge. Much of their sound reminds me of Born Dead Icons, especially when they go for the all out Motorhead sound. Their lyrics are bitter, angry, critical, and perfectly fitting the music here. When Intense Youth! gets on board they kick out the jams, new school thrash style. Their politically motivated and emotionally responsible lyrics make them instantly likeable. Fans of thinking thrash outfits like Rambo and Crucial Unit will like them for sure. LO (\$3.50 to Andy c/o Behold, The Youthquake!/PO Box 10223/Pittsburgh, PA 15232)



Geography plays intense and engaged emotive hardcore. Their songs are filled with vim and vigor. They hit all the highs and lows they can in these five songs, taking you along for the ride. Foxhole adds another nine songs to his CD. They play a quirky kind of melodic hardcore, taking from elements of emo and indie. Most of their songs have a very personal and stripped down vibe. Sometimes a little too much. The best thing about them is their crafty personal lyrics. LO (\$5 to Chumprine/PO Box 27/Annville, PA 17003)

This one has some pretty slick packaging, considering who is on this record. Kung Fu Rick brings you one brutal and blazing track of energized metalcore. The Ultimate Warriors put nine fast thrash songs on their side. The vocals are either screeching or growling, with lyrics about the appropriately silly things. Both recordings are from 2001. LO (Robotic Empire/12001 Aintree Ln./Reston, VA 20191)

Goddamn! When I put the needle down on the Dead For A Minute side I had no idea what to expect. Well, I got punched in the face is what happened! Heavy and chaotic French metal core pummeling and destructive, taking no prisoners! I think that these guys should come over the Atlantic and show all of these new fashionable trendy metal core rip each other off types a lesson in brutality! As I said, heavy and chaotic but not stupid sounding like too many tech wanna be Dillinger Escape Plan or Orange County 3<sup>rd</sup> rate black metal moshing type shit. I think my neighbors are permanently pissed; I almost blew my speakers listening to this side at excessive volumes! Desiderata (from Germany) side was pretty good. I really liked the CD I reviewed a few issues back, I believe it was called Suppose We Try. Unfortunately the production was sort of lacking compared to what I was used to. Heavy metallic and emotional as usual this is still a good release despite my pickiness. I recommend contacting these guys and trying to find their full length, it should serve as a good introduction to this great German band. I am still listening to that CD two and a half years later. I really wish I could have gotten into this one more. CF (Shogun/39 Rue Du Mont D'Arene/51100 Reims/France)

These two delinquent French bands promptly ditched class from the German school of midpaced '90s metalcore that the likes of Acme, Carol, and Systral all aptly pioneered, ran straight to practice and somehow made the style sound welcomed again. The patterned napalmed vocals, pulverizing dissonance, and triggered double bass are all here, aided with the simple trick of utilizing good timing in our contaminated scene of dullards who still think it's ironic to like later-era D.R.I. Quite understandably, these two bands come across as relentlessly burgeoning walls of noise on the verge of a total sonic meltdown. It is refreshingly brutal, tortured, and convincing of its purpose. Supersonic Revolution aren't afraid of a good maniacal guitar solo, while Submerge, the better of the two, seem to have let Bolt Thrower and Voivod infiltrate their poisoned consciences to the point of making no mistake: this is total metal war. *Viva la France! MM (Shogun/39 Rue Du Mont D'Arenne/51100 Reims/France)*

Sick Terror rips it up with five bursts of crisp thrash. Their songs are edgy, fast, and catchy. They do four originals and one Negative FX cover. It is pretty good. Ruido have eight songs on their side. The sound here is thick and heavy grind with a few choruses. Mostly though, it is just the sound of assault. They sing in Spanish with English translations printed. Oddly enough, all of these Rudio songs are taken from a split 7" that existed a few years ago with Tetracéfico. Since then, they have done more records and become more popular so people might be into going back to their roots with this release. LO (Sin Fronteras/PO Box 8004/Minneapolis, MN 55408)

Unholy shit!! This is an awesome split by the legendary nippon-core grinders Unholy Grave and U.S. crust-grinders Kerum. All of the U.G. songs are "previously unreleased" recordings and are in the brutal style of their Tortured Alive 10 inch. Fucking great. Kerum, on the other hand play some brutal grindy crust-core with wrenching growls and intense screams. Also fucking great. If anyone likes grind or crust, they should get this. Now... DJ (RSR Records c/o Sandro Gessner/Str. des Friedens 45/07819 Mittelpollnitz/Germany)

Not Enough Bullets are a speeding train of hardcore and thrash intensity. Their songs zoom past with a scream, a blast, and just one lingering chord. Their sound is crazy but it seems to come together well in fleeting moments of sound and energy. Fittingly, their lyrics are angry criticize of the world which get explained in the microcosm of the punk song. Not Enough Bullets are stripped and raw, and that makes what they do here appealing to me. D-Comp plays similar stuff, but faster. Their songs seem almost like they are on the wrong speed at first. Instantly, I am reminded of Coleman; who played so quick you thought their insides would just burst out at any moment. Coleman released everything, caring not what part of them got beat around in the mix. D-Comp's harsh vocals and unforgetting drum beat elicit the same fascination. Their distorted bass gives extra depth as they sometimes fall into a Combat Wounded Veteran vibe as well. I also liked their grim and negative lyrics that paint a prickly view of reality. For those interested in DIY hardcore that is harsh, fast, and modern this is a good record to check out. LO (xstevemx@hotmail.com)

Both of these bands are from Germany, and play similar styles of screamy, noisy, slightly metal hardcore. I don't know why, but the Zann side stuck out to me more. English explanations are present, and the lyrics are personal and political observations. CD. (Pure Minds Records/Lot 257/Kg Zainal Tambahan 1/31200 Chemor/Perak/Malaysia)

Twelve inches of vinyl focusing on some of the more obscure bands in the greater Nevada and Northern Californian scenes, most of which, it would seem, hail from smaller scenes. Twenty-five tracks from Johnny Cock and the Nuts, Headgrenade, Fuck Your Heroes, Chainsaw Little Kids, Sons of Liberty, Gabriel's Ratchets, Fracas, Los Dryheavers, and Act of Martyr, (to name a few of the more colorfully-named entries). A pretty varied mix of punk and hardcore sounds; the style of much of the music present here kind of reminds me of those old David Hayes comps from back in the early '90s, though the per capita quality of the content is much lower. The quality of the recordings varies quite a bit as well: most is more than adequate, but a few contributions here sound a lot like not-so-great demo recordings. This release does have a strong spirit of independence (in the "fuck you if you don't like it" sense) and explicit DIY sentiments, both of which I definitely can respect. TS (Sick of Talk Records/PO Box 9723/ Reno, NV 89507)

This compilation is subtitled "19 bands destroying Minutemen music." That provides a fairly good description for many of the tracks included here. The bands included constitute a cross section of the sounds of punk and hardcore in Europe and the US circa now. All seem to enjoy taking on their tune and a few turn in very listenable performances. It is nice to see that the Minutemen are remembered. SJS (Cracks In The Sidewalk Records/Mario Lapecorella/Via Principe Amedeo/347 70123 Bari/Italy)

A varied compilation of popular hardcore-punk and ska bands form the larger punk scene can be found here. Agnostic Front, Fifteen, Diehard Youth, Jersey, Link 80, The Boils, Hudson Falcons, and many more lend a track. The comp comes with complete listing of where you can find these and other songs from the artists featured here. None of these bands were particularly interesting to me, so it's hard to be excited by this or consider it much more than another sampler. LO (Almost Good Music/PO Box 2233/Fond Du Lac, WI 54936)

This comp has a mix of crust and traditional punk rock. The ones you might have heard of are Resist & Exist, Conflict, Vice Squad, Kismet Hardcore, Red Flag '77, and Riot/Clone, though there are ten others that might strike your fancy. You are going to want to skip directly to track 2 because the first one is probably the most irritating song ever. The other ones are generally Crass influenced or just sort of heavy. It is a fine comp, but it could use more than the couple sentences of description about why animal rights are important. LO (<http://mediatrack.digitalbomb.com>)

This comp comes from the Netherlands I believe and man, it goes all over the place. It starts out with your basic electronic music—the same track being looped over and over with some spacey sounds and a steady beat. Then it goes into soft organs and pretty bells everywhere with light vocals. A couple of the songs have a electro-bossanova sound to them. Then towards the end is where things get turned around and they leave you with some heavy metal songs. The last five songs sound very close to that band, System of a Down... yeah. The transition in music was pretty surprising... they could have eased it in a bit better. EM (hourke@vahoo.com)

Okay, a 22 band compilation from the Motor City. Yup, good 'ol Detroit. There's no one here that I've ever heard of but I guess that doesn't mean shit. There are a ton of bands on this comp playing every genre of punk rock that one can think of. I hate MOST comps and this was no exception. NW (11655 Joseph Campau/Hamtramck, MI 48212)

This CD is a benefit for the American veterans of the Vietnam War. So, it is only fitting that all the bands on this CD cover familiar rock and folk songs from that era. The bands you might recognize are Q And Not U, Atom Bomb Pocketknife, Enon, J. Robbins, Cable Car Theory, Ted Leo, The Gooses, Dame Fate, and The Panoply Academy Legionnaires. There are twenty tracks from twenty varied bands on this CD. It was pretty entertaining to hear these old songs through the filter of twenty-first century rock. LO (Exotic Fever Recs./PO Box 297/College Park, MD 20741)

Four bands from the Will Not Clear Man roster give one song each. Seedy Sea Controversy and Burn English play melodic hardcore that is quite pleasant. Over & Over rip it up with a screamo song. Meridians Divided close out the CD with a spacey, sweet emo rock song. You can get this from the label for \$1. LO (Will Not Clear Man/PO Box 911/Chicago, IL 60612)

This is a 32 track CD of Pittsburgh area punk rock and HC. Some bands I enjoyed the most were Behind Enemy Lines, Gunsinking, Chaistic Christ, and Aus-Rotten's ripping cover of "Tube Disasters," by Flux of Pink Indians. There are some other catchy punk ditties on this, so if you like Pittsburgh a lot, maybe you should get this. CD (Rob Tabachka/10 Victory Ln./Leetsdale, PA 15056)

This triple 12" compilations features all sorts of independent bands from Minneapolis, MN. Rock, rockabilly, hardcore, garage, crust, grind, metalcore, you name it... There are 54 bands on here, but I'll just list some of the better known bands like Dillinger Four, Holding On, Misery, Onward To Mayhem, Song of Zarathustra, Scorned, and The Crush. An interesting comp with something for everyone, though the flipside of the variety is that there are plenty of tracks to hate as well depending on your musical taste. Minneapolis sure has their shit together. How many other towns can produce a comp with 54 different bands on it? Shit. KM (Havoc Records/Blood of The Young/T.H.D./Modern Radio)

This sampler CD has 35 songs from various Deathwish, Bridge Nine, Indecision, and Thorp Records bands. It is sort of like going to Hell Fest, without all the sweaty dudes getting in your face. Seriously though, for those interested in the genres of mosh metal or straightedge this collection has all the big bands you want. It features Converge, Throwdown, In Control, Bleeding Through, Count Me Out, American Nightmare, Champion, Reaching Forward, My Luck, Over My Dead Body, I Hate You, and many more. The insert gives you pictures of the releases these songs come from and a suggestion that you should buy them. (Not too subtle.) LO (Deathwish/10 Lothrop St./Beverly MA 01915)

This is a compilation with bands mostly from Ohio. There are some good songs that really took me back about 5 years. The recordings are fuzzy and everything sounds pretty bad, but good at the same time. There are several punk rock songs with catchy tunes and snotty lyrics and vocals. This record definitely reminded me of the good times when people were singing along, piss drunk on the way back with titles like "Slit Your Throat." EM (Cock Punch Records/614 1/2 N Mantua/Kent, OH 44240)

Kaaos, were (are?) one of the original and great Finnish hardcore bands that formed circa 1981. Jakke being the bands mainstay throughout various lineup changes and juggling. These are all mostly Scandinavian bands paying homage to a widely influential and great band. Twenty-one bands all together, featuring bands like Juggling Jugulars (Fin) doing justice to the anti-sexist song "Nukke," Totuus (Fin), Rajoitus (Swe), Detestation (USA), Church of Nihil (Fin), Forca Macabra (Fin) and Ratos de Porao (Brazil). There are more bands but my eyes are strained and my hands are tired and I don't want to write all of them out. Most of these songs are pretty good but I recommend checking out the original stuff, just because it hardly gets better than the real deal. Includes Kaaos family tree and other info. CF (Fight Records/Hikiyuorekatu 17 D 36/33710 Tampere/Finland)

This is a compilation of experimental electronica music from Pittsburgh. Several styles of electronica are demonstrated on this CD, including IDM, noise, breakcore, and ambient. Some of the songs are loud and piercing while others are soft and have some breadth. There are super fast songs that sound like they were cut up from all over, and there are more spacey sounding songs where sounds are more drawn out and expanded. If you are into electronica music, this will definitely give you a taste of a lot of different styles that are out. EM (SSS Records/5879 Darlington Rd./Pittsburgh PA 15217)

Hobart offers up nine new songs here. The music takes the forefront on this recording, and with it you are taken through lots of different ideas on melodic grooves and changeups. Hobart seems to be interested mostly in playing a heavily aggressive rock that has its roots in compelling harmony. Many parts remind me of Planes Mistaken For Stars in as much as they play driving music that occasionally sticks in a spot for optimum rock out. Hobart is rough around the edges though. LO (Sumo Agnew/1031 E Grant/Tucson, AZ 85719)

Three songs from this local band. The first time I saw The Threads they were playing on someone's lawn to drunken college kids. They played modern underground stuff with keyboards, and they sounded a lot like At The Drive-In. Over time, their sound has molded more into a harsh new wave sound. These songs have catchy hooks and very present vocals. I was surprised by the depth and fury in these songs. They play all the time around here and they are certainly getting better at what they do. LO (thethreads@mail.com)

For some wacky reason, this demo starts out with a long sample from Twin Peaks. I suppose it's an attempt at setting up an atmosphere, which seems what this band is intent on creating. Slow, metallic sludge that reminds me of a less-accomplished and less politically inspired Ire. The visual aesthetic of the cover and lyric sheet are really nicely done, though, with nifty gold and black inks on black stock. Seems well-done enough for what it is, though without speed or content my interest is easily lost. TS (Rosewater Foundation/27 South Summit #5/Spylanti, MI 48197)

Four fast hardcore songs in the old school style. Death In Custody plays music born from the struggle of Detroit and refined through the experiences of its members. LO (1131 W Warren #314/Detroit, MI 48206)



**DEAD BY DAWN • 3 song tour CD demo**

Dead By Dawn plays sick and evil hardcore that drones. Moments of crisp guitar solos come out of the sludge, only to return again. It is brutal shit. Seriously depressing and negative lyrics accompany this assault, and it fits well. LO (deadbydawn13@yahoo.com)

**DEAD BY DAWN • 6 song CD demo**

Hey, check it out, another demo from Dead By Dawn. This one has six songs. Their style hasn't changed to terribly much from he last release, but these songs do seem to have more crunch and less sludge. Still, it is thick and heavy hardcore, but these songs seem to be more aggressive in terms of tempo. I like this more than the three songs CD. LO (deadbydawn13@yahoo.com)

**THE CHASE • demo CD**

Cool-looking little black slip case cover, but I'm afraid my interest ends there. Well, I take it back. I like cello and The Chase boasts a cello player. However, the recording is pretty damn demo quality and the songs lack cohesion and the vocals are almost unlistenable. I like some of the feminist lyrics, but the delivery kills it for me. After two or three songs, I can't listen the monotony any more. I am sorry, because I really want to like it. 16 songs, 47 minutes. DO (4206 N. Commercial/Portland, OR 97217; thechase57@yahoo.com)

**THE FIRST CUT IS THE DEEPEST • demo CD**

This band reminded me a lot of Botch. They have similar vocals, the same build ups with the stops and the breaks, and they have the same sort of intensity. They have the driving guitars that at times have semi-intricate parts but just as soon as it might possibly get better, it breaks down into a hardcore dance party. The mellow song is pretty alright, it has a lot of space and you just sorta glide on through it. EM (freethedead@hotmail.com)

**BURIAL • To Inherit This Disease... demo**

All right! New bands kickin' ass! Burial are from Portland, OR, land of punk rock fantasy. This band plays an original style of heavy mid-paced crusty emotional female fronted hardcore. This is one of the few demos I have actually listened to repeatedly. The vocals are harsh and screamed and spew out lyrics (in a very poetic and unique style) about revolution and the current world lock down terrorist/police state. The music is catchy and I had the plodding and chugging riffs stuck in my head. When is the 7" or full length coming out? This band would sound even better if they had a thicker production. Only five songs on this piece of plastic but well worthy of your're time. CF (2336 N Killingsworth St./Portland, OR 97217)

**ONXALERT • CD demo**

OnXAlert play strained and harsh hardcore. Their basic sound has a thrashcore/skatecore backbone but they toss in the occasional mosh breakdown here and there. I liked their lyrics because they seem to be written on a personal level, yet completely fit within a political context. OnXAlert takes on issues on their songs which are varied and worth discussing more. All in all, a pretty good demo. LO (projectgrizzly716@hotmail.com)

**PILGER • Silence CD demo**

This DIY punk band plays basic hardcore anthems with urgent vocals. Named after the documentarian John Pilger, this band also attempts to bring light to issues they find of great importance. Much attention is given to the DIY tenants of thinking for yourself and doing your best to treat the world well. Musically, Pilger is pretty raw. Their songs are straight froward, with the familiar driving guitar and circle pit drum beat. Rough around the edges, but there are some good things to take away from this for sure. LO (\$10 to South Coast Records/38 Gatcombe/Southampton/SO31 5PX/UK)

**TIME OUT • A Histories Warning... Never Again demo**

Straight ahead crust from Sweden (I think; all of the information on the cover seems to want me to check out a website, and while I got nothing against websites usually, I don't like being forced to use the internet to contact a band or record label). The overall aesthetic here is very conservative crust: stark black and white images of "war porn"; a real or computer-simulated cut-n-paste layout; the traditional "stencil" font. And while I don't necessarily have the peace punk reference points, I can tell you that the music is relentlessly driven, augmented with classic crust leads, and good screamed vocals; I think if you identify with the genre, you will probably like this. Lyric-wise, there's lots of talk of war and genocide (multiple references to WWII), police, statism, and, uh, war; also explicitly anarchist. Nothing I disagree with, yet I find myself wishing there were more fresh and original expressions of anarchism in the greater hardcore scene. Not my thing, but seems well-executed, overall. TS (mediatack.digitalbomb.com)

**NERVI • demo**

Nervi plays harsh hardcore with serous grind influences. Sickly deep vocals combine with the crushing weight of the sound to create a bestial tone. Nervi uses distorted guitars and heavy breakdowns to bring the brutality home. The songs on this demo scream out anger, pain, and frustration with the world we live in. LO (\$2 to Steffano Bardi/Via Val Sabbia 6-B/20161 Milano (SH)/Italy)

**I ADAPT • Why Not Make Today Legendary CD demo**

I Adapt come out fighting with nine straight forward hardcore songs. They play burly youth crew sounding music with a good dose of melody. In their lyrics they discuss social issues with a good amount of intelligence and heart. I Adapt seems to want to inspire and entertain, which is pretty respectable. Plus, they are from Iceland! LO (Birkir F. Vidarsson/Hverfald 21/112 Reykjavik/Iceland)

**LEVINES • Black Bones, Boney Legs CD demo**

Four songs of crazy hardcore laced with new wave. The Levines' sound comes from a hole deep down, one filled with soul jams and distorted guitar. For those of you out there who love Blood Brothers, this band is for you. These songs move along quickly and are over just before you really get a handle on all the jangly noise contained in them. You really have to listen to these four songs a couple times to appreciate them. Actually, there are really eight songs on here, but the other ones are just throw away noise they didn't want to get reviews. LO (\$2 from the4077.com)

**FXP ARMY • CD demo**

Sometimes people make bands purely to create freaky noise and sing songs about pee and poop. It is hard to understand what convinces them that the joke is that funny or the idea that original to create more than, say, five songs—but often they come out with tens of them. FXP Army is such a band. LO (Marko Jusutovic/Östragunnesgarde 11D/41749 Göteborg/Sweden)

**KENJI • Demonstrations '02 demo CD**

These fellows have played in Goleta a number of times and I always seem to miss seeing them, much to my chagrin. I hear nothing but praise for their live show and from this demo CD, I can understand what I've been missing. It is some serious energy being expended here. Very well-played thrashy rock with interesting lyrics. Amidst the scratchy-throated screams and wailing guitars are intricate melodies and excellent breakdowns. This type of music will probably never reach mainstream radio airplay, in spite of its quality, because sincerity and honest music innovation is thankfully still property of the underground. As long as bands like Kenji still churn out high intensity music that they create from their own hearts and minds, punk will continue to live and breathe freely. This is an awesome CD, from 4 different recordings – four songs live from the Living Room in Goleta, two recorded with John Lyons in the studio, one recorded live in Ventura and two on the radio at UC Irvine. 9 songs, 35 minutes. DO (PO Box 3441/Ventura, CA 93006; kenjinnoise@hotmail.com)

**FOURTEEN OR FIGHT • CD demo**

Seven quick songs here. Fourteen Or Fight play fast hardcore in the skaterock vein. It is straightforward, punchy, a bit thrashy, and full of energy. Their songs focus in on issues of the world and the scene, each time taking a stance against the silliness or downright offensive shit they see. I liked these songs and most people into fast hardcore from the Mid-West would probably be into it as well. You can download this demo from their website at fourteenorfight.com. LO (\$3 to 281 Whitewood Dr./Streamwood, IL 60107)

**ABLE WAS I • demo**

Able Was I cooperate somewhat aggressive hardcore with moodiness and melody on this three song, nicely packaged demo. As far as demos go, it's not that bad, but it's definitely not something I would listen to again. There are some heavy parts that you can tap your fingers to, and the instrumentation on the second song is pretty good at times, but the good is outnumbered by some musical oddities. For instance, the backup vocals sound like someone is making fun of Cher, and the keyboard placement on the third track, "I'm In Love With A Younger Man" had me thinking that I just beat Zelda. This is just a demo though, and I bet if Kurt, Brad, Ryan, and Jaxun work on shit, they could be pretty tight. MAH (1305 N Tyndall/Tucson, AZ 85719)

**STATE OF PARANOIA • demo**

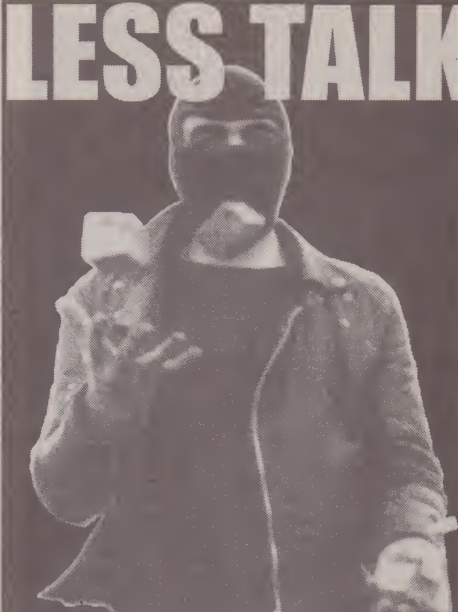
This is my favorite demo of this issue. State Of Paranoia plays intense music with speed and weight. It reminds me of Tragedy in the many moments of brooding melody, but when the pace picks up it sound more like No Parade. It is an impressively heavy and well crafted demo. Pieces layered atop one another create thick walls of sound and the occasional breakdown brings in infectious moments of sing-alongs. I really, really like this. Amazingly enough, this demo was made by just one guy. He played all the parts and recorded it himself. According to the note, there is no one in his area who shares his musical taste. Zieg doch nach Portland um! LO (Fabien Dietz/Weg Zum Poethem 68/58313 Herdecke/Germany)

**FINANCIAL PANTHER • demo**

This came with a nice humble note; seems this band is three ex-members of Bullyrag a.k.a. Fucking Thunder and one ex-Suicide Nation. Seems both bands were fairly well-known and were around for long enough, so it seems fair to let folks know. They did have me fooled though, the whole aesthetic of the packaging has a very no-wave thing going on, and while I got the reference, I couldn't help but think "Computer Cougar"; however what I got was four songs of powerful and emotional hardcore with some melodic tendencies. None of the elements here are astoundingly original, but the way everything comes together just sounds really fresh. The lyrics here are really thoughtful; well-written examinations of the ritualized and recycled roles that seem to currently be keeping the political progression of hardcore stagnant and mired in its more spectacular qualities. Hardcore needs more bands developing the kinds of analysis present here. This is the second best thing I got for review this quarter; this CD-R is a keeper, and I will definitely be on the watch for more from these guys and gal. TS (\$3 ppd to James Fella/5222 S Monaco Dr./Tempe, AZ 85283)

**BLACK EYES CLUB • CD demo**

After reading through the lyrics and listening to this CD a couple of times, I can't shake the Born Against influence I am hearing in these songs. Of course, they have some modern day thrash in there as well, but a lot of this demo sounds like Born Against to me. Albeit dubbed on a shitty stereo... As they fly by, the songs here question the everyday barriers and frustrations with observations and sarcasm. I like it. LO (363 East 18th St./Hamilton, ON/L9A 4P7/Canada)



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Re-release of this seminal New York hardcore punk band's 1983 debut album pressed onto vinyl! The Nihilistics originally hailed from Long Island, but gigged around Manhattan in clubs like A7, CBGB's, and the Mudd Club, and appeared on the legendary New York Thrash compilation with the Beastie Boys, the Mad, and the Bad Brains. Through their wild live shows, they developed a reputation as one of the most damaged and misanthropic bands in New York City. **(Repressed in January 2003!!)**

**THE 'BAD FORM 7"**

The debut disk of a maniacal whirlwind of rock n roll madness from this NJ band. Followed up by an appearance on TMU's "Troubleman Mix Tape" and an EP on the Youth Attack label. Too well versed in early hardcore and dissonant no wave to be able to be called a "garage rock" band in good faith. **(Last copies left!!!)**

**THE SKABS: AGED TO PERFECTION CD**

Vaudevillian deathrock with a carnivalesque, new wave sound from this veteran NY band. Says Punk Planet, they "should play with the Faint, but they'd probably scare the audience."

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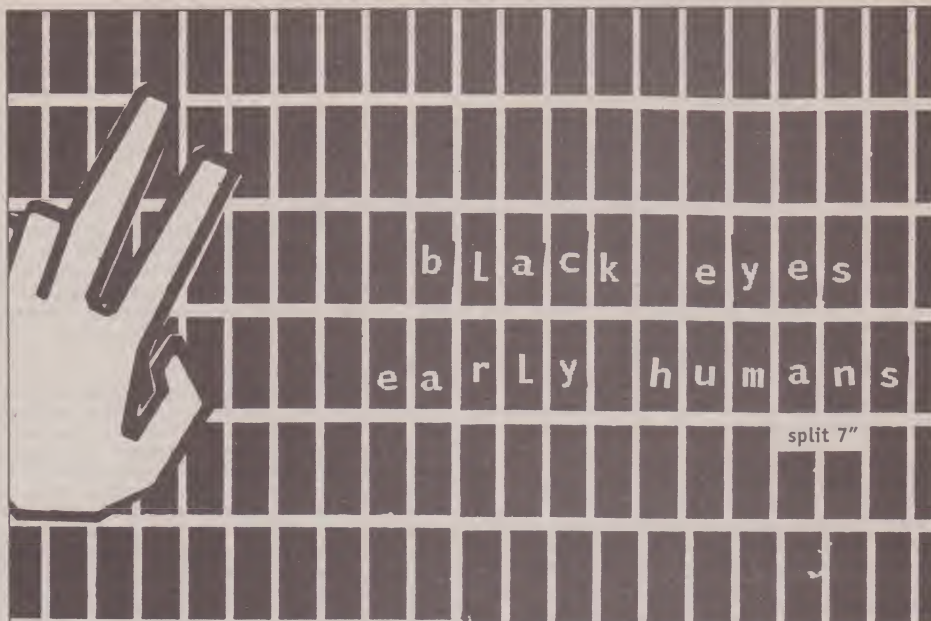
**'MISSING FOUNDATION: 1933' CD**

Re-issue of the long out of print 1988 album by New York City's most controversial agit-prop industrial noise band. A feared Lower East Side group, their upsidedown martini glass logo is world famous, they've garnered a reference in Allen Ginsberg's *Poems of Illumination*, they've been followed by the FBI, and an impressive portion of their live shows ended with cops in riot gear. They're the real deal.

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**(Out February 2003)**

A death-disco dance party of remixed tunes courtesy of the Bay Area's newest deathrock hitmakers. Their debut LP is due out on GSL in January '03, and a split 7" with San Francisco troublemakers the Phantom Limbs also on Hungry Eye coming out February '03.



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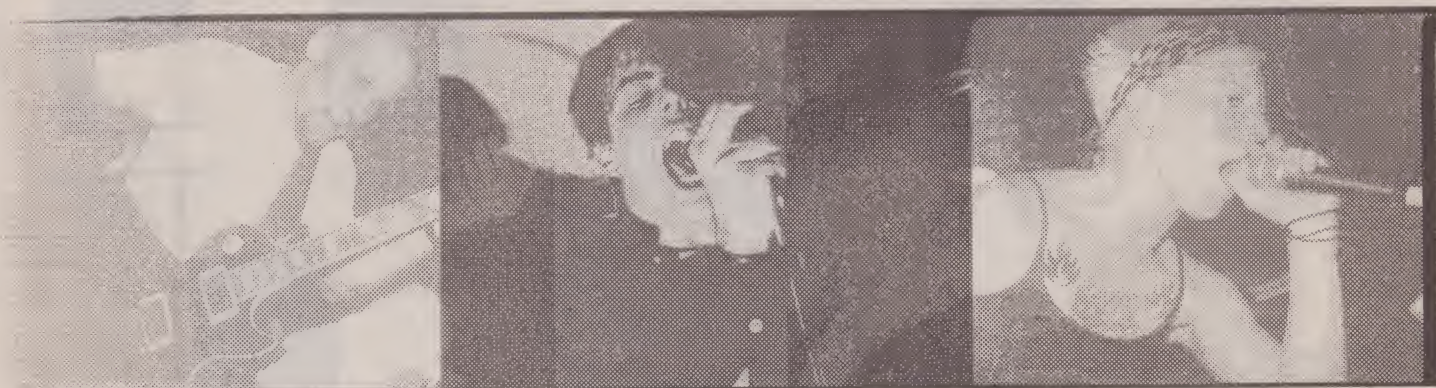
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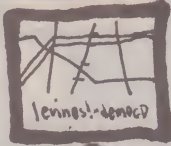
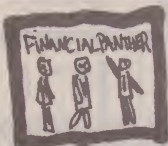
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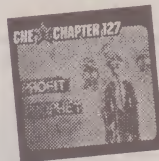
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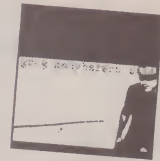
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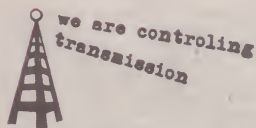
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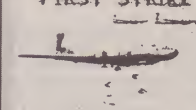
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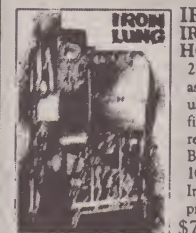


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**AVOW #13** 5.5x8.5 \$2 36pgs.

Forget whether or not luck has anything to do with issue #13 because this 'zine is just damn good. Keith has created "The Alphabet Issue," an "A to Z slapdash collection of laments and joys" that features superb artwork, incredible layout and intriguing anecdotes on second chances, masturbation, Iraq, and personal reflection, among other topics. To make the dish even sweeter, he serves up a 12-page review supplement that provides hours of hilarious insights into the latest, or maybe just greatest, music on the market. Sign yourself up. BL (Keith Rosson/2410 SE Taylor/Portland, OR 97214)

**BLACKTHORN #2** news \$1.25 20pgs.

One of those 'zines where even holding it in your hands you know you're on to something good. Political in content without being dry, or condescending, this issue has an interview with people involved with the I.W.W., articles on the Intifada, urban permaculture, home brewing, an interview with the band Eterna Inocencia centered around what is currently happening in Argentina (not band related either!). All in all, an essential publication! MA (PO Box 11046/Portland, OR 97211)

**BLEED #2** 5.5x8.5 \$1/trade 4pgs.

This issue is composed of letters editor Sue has written to members of her family and friends. In these letters Sue explains herself and examines the differences she feels between herself and those she loves, raising personal and difficult issues. Issue #2 seems to be Sue making peace with the people in her life. SJS (Sue Taylor/PO Box 4316/Philadelphia, PA 19118)

**BURNT #5** 8.5x11 \$1 20pgs.

It has been a year since the last issue came out. In the interim they have amassed a lot of reviews, but not a lot of other content. The break meant a break from the 'zine all together and it really shows in the content. The anecdotal stories, thoughts on porn, ideas of loneliness and making peace with yourself, and the facts about New Jersey are all fine and good. They just seem quickly thrown together and aren't terribly interesting for this reviewer. LO (Frank Ortega/PO Box 5754/Parsippany, NJ 07054)

**CHUMPIRE #155** 8.5x11 37¢/trade 4pgs.

Two stapled 8.5" by 11" pages worth of, primarily, a person's recollections of getting a job as a teacher in the public school system. I once wanted to be an elementary or high school teacher, but my own experiences have led me to conclude that being a teacher in the institutional context is to play the role of cop or martyr, often both. There is some other stuff stuck in here about recording for bands and some record reviews tacked on at the end. Not much else to say. TS (PO Box 27/Annville, PA 17003)

**CHUMPIRE #156** 8.5x11 37¢ 2pgs.

This new issue has some interesting opinion pieces about school bureaucracy and the support of punk businesses versus local businesses. Other tidbits include reviews of releases, shows, and movies. LO (PO Box 27/Annville, PA 17003)

**THE CIA MAKES SCIENCE FICTION UNEXCITING** 4.25x5.5 \$1 20pgs.

This intelligent and interesting pamphlet tells a complete and compelling story about the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. In-depth coverage of the various players, facts, and theories give a nice weight to this read. Plus, it is written in a reader-friendly style that allows you to soak up all of the information without feeling lectured. I'm looking forward to the continuation of this series. LO (Microcosm/PO Box 14332/Portland, OR 97293)

**COMPLETE CONTROL #10** 7.5x8.5 \$2 36pgs.

This issue of *Complete Control* is comprised of three stories and one theory piece. Editor Greg tells stories from his life experience frankly and directly. The first story describes Greg's relationship with a vibrant woman who enters and leaves his life and community rather quickly. Their paths joyfully entwine until an unexpected decision removes her from his life. The story then examines the aftermath of this event and lingering effects of memories. Bridges, the music of Bruce Springsteen, and urban decay are themes running through this story of hope amidst brutal circumstances. In the second story Greg writes of his passage from unthinking predatory behavior toward women to a state of mindful awakening to power and abuse in sexual relationships. This story is intensely personal as Greg works to come to terms with his past. The third story recounts the end of the life of an alcoholic HIV positive homeless man in Richmond, VA. Greg closes this issue with a "token, long-winded theory piece." He selects a series of destructive issues confronting our humans and proposes some ideas we might consider on the way to a peaceful anarchist society. SJS (PO Box 5021/Richmond, VA 23220)

**COPPER PRESS #13** w/CD 8x8 \$5 120pgs.

*Copper Press* covers a variety of music genres and folks working in the arts. In this issue you will find articles about DJ Spooky, Mary Timony, Lozenge, Curtains, Karate, Silkworm, pianist Matthew Goodheart, Planes Mistaken For Stars, trumpeter Tomas Stanko, and several more folks. The articles delve into band history and personal philosophies of creativity and are informative and well written. The DJ Spooky and Lozenge pieces go fairly deep into the techniques and thought processes employed during the creation of music. The piece that stands out for me is an interview with a person named Rob Abeyta, Jr. He discusses his passage from a confused punk kid to a painter in search of the Middle Way. Another piece tells, in words and photos, the roundabout journey of a guy driving an unlicensed car from Idaho through southwest and southern US on his way to home in Michigan. *Copper Press* features excellent graphics and layout and in book form. SJS (PO Box 1601/Acme, MI 49610)

**DAYBREAK #3** news \$1 12pgs.

This is a Midwestern anarchist publication with news, opinion pieces, and some factual information. What can I say? It is information that will keep you informed. Most of these news items will be dated and I am sure there will be a new issue or two out by the time you read this. Drop em a line and check this out its free. CF (PO Box 14607/Minneapolis, MN 55404)

**DEATH OF A TOASTER #2** 5.5x8.5 10¢ 4pgs.

This is a short one. Inside you can read, a letter from a metal head, some CD reviews, notes from SoCal, lists of best and worst bands, silly quotable, and some other crazy stuff. Since it is so short, none of it really has the time to get very interesting. LO (Ben T/191 Glen Oban Dr./Arnold, MD 21012)

**DUNK AND PISS #9** 4.25x5.5 \$1 60pgs.

When you've got personality, no one can take it away from you. And Alex stands out on paper like a giraffe stands out in a strawberry patch. Critiques have labeled this "another high school 'zine" and, in doing so, they foolishly overlook the work he has created. Alex rambles, rants, and raves from beginning to end; letting the reader into his world of near-death train experiences to library theft to trees in the mall. You'll find yourself hanging on to every sentence, wondering where his stream of consciousness writing will take you next. Quite simply, his life is real and entertaining and you should read about it. My only complaint is that the layout needs some help. BL (11 Alger Dr./Rochester, NY 14624)

**EAT SHIT MAGAZINE #23** 8.5x11 \$1.25 34pgs.

A chaotic cut and paste rant and rave 'zine from SLT (?) CA. Crusty attitude and look; this is an all right read. The best part about this 'zine is the interview with Submission Hold. Show reviews record reviews columns etc... nothing really had me totally captivated and I thought the 'zine was kind of one big mess. Oh well, at least this person is doing something I have always wanted to do—make their own 'zine! CF (PO Box 4766/SLT, CA 96157)

**(EM) #15** 6x6 \$2 48pgs.

This slick little 'zine is all about the bike. Articles about commuting, tips for being an all weather rider, and a bike style scene report from Minneapolis can be found here. Interviews with the Band Bicycle, the November group, and Vanilla Bicycles (an independent frame company). There are also music and 'zine reviews, and some skate park reviews. Thoroughly enjoyable. CD (PO Box 14728/Portland, OR 97293)

**FISH PISS Vol. 2** 3 6x8 \$3 120pgs.

The sheer volume of information and printed contribution of this 'zine is staggering. Bound like a book, *Fish PiSS* has pages upon pages of subversive underground content. Along with their regular columnists'/story writers' contributions, interviews, reviews, and comics, this issue has a few focus topics as well. There is a special section on the woeful foreign policy and domestic corruption of the Bush regime, with numerous hard-hitting articles that are fully supported by secondary literature. Also, in an attempt to highlight areas of local interest, there are pieces on a local record store and a downtown neighborhood. *Fish PiSS* reads easily, coming off as smart and pulled together throughout. LO (Box 1232/Place d'Armes/Montreal, QC/H1Y 3H2/Canada)

**FLAT TIRE #5** 5.5x8.5 \$1 52pgs.

*Flat Tire* tells a very personal tale told through flashbacks and stories. The memories have faded so that all but the especially poignant and pointed parts remain. This 'zine really hit home for me. I enjoyed the writing style that blended self-effacing realizations with descriptions of pain and personality. Personal 'zines that speak to you as if there person were in the same room impress me. *Flat Tire* spoke to me and made me sad along with her. LO (End Of The Line/610 E Wright St./Pensacola, FL 32501)

**FRACTURE #23** 8.5x11 \$3 92pgs.

This issue of *Fracture* contains interviews with Hans of Sobermind Records, Simon Wells of Southport, Brandon of Sound Idea Distribution, the Dillinger Four, and The Robots. The discussions revolve on issues of DIY philosophy and practices, band and personal histories, changing punk scene experiences as one grows older, and feelings about various pop and rock stars. The columns sections is lengthy and full of personal and political stories and reminiscing. The music and 'zine review sections are extensive. The reviews are in depth and show a serious knowledge of and love for the whole punk and hardcore music scene. SJS (Unit 100/61 Wellfield Road/Cardiff, CF24 3DG/UK)

**FREE SOCIETY #13** w/CD 5.5x8.5 \$3 74pgs.

Lots and lots of content fills this 'zine. This issue features a couple nice interviews with Canadian rockers Submission Hold and 401. Since Free Society has a large anarchist slant, you can expect a good amount of news and political opinion. There are pages upon pages of things to get your brain working. Most of this news gets told as a write-up about a particular direct action event, but the principles that drive people to do them are not left out. They also dabble in some music and show reviews. Overall, the political side wins out over the punk side—but having both certainly made for a nice balance. This issue also includes a CD-R from 401. LO (freesociety@hotmail.com)

**GAGNAUGAD #2** 5.5x8.5 \$7 28pgs.

With columns, reviews, and a Sworn In interview, this can be described easily as a music 'zine. You are invited to send promos and contributions. Aside from one contribution, the writing is all in Icelandic. LO (Birkir F. Vidarsson/Hverfald 21/112 Reykjavik/Iceland)

**GENETIC DISORDER #16** 6.5x10.25 \$3 73pgs.

This is a very slickly produced turd; it's been around for a good long while, and it seems like the kinda thing that you probably either already know if you like or not. I don't. Rob Halford, satanism, pictures of skulls culled from old punk records, serial killer Gary Heidnik, personals pranks, pictures of butts farting, and record/'zine reviews. Think of it as the print equivalent of "Jackass," as this television show is what happens when a bunch of washed-up skateboarders obtain access to media. So is *Genetic Disorder* the result of a bunch of washed-up punks wasting trees and ink. Very So-Cal. TS (PO Box 15237/San Diego, CA 92175)

**GIRL/BOY #4** 5.5x8.5 \$3 60pgs.

This is the "firsts" issue of *Girl/Boy*. Half of this 'zine is by boys, the other by girls. Lots of interesting firsts in here. Don't read this if you have problems reading about peoples intimate situations. Some of the stories are funny, some are gross, some are sexy, and some are sad—but they all revolve about coming to terms with sexuality, for all genders sexes and preferences. Recommended. CD (Rob/2441 Lyndale Ave. S/Minneapolis, MN 55405)

**GLASSHOUSES #2** 4.25x5.5 \$1 12pgs.

This is one of those little 'zines that's hard not to pick up because it just looks cool. Then I saw that it was created by the same person who did *The Dirty Girl Chronicles* and that was enough for me. This is a more serious side of her and it's pretty intimate. She writes openly about personal struggles complimented with her illustrations. It kind of reminded me of *Ration*, the way that she fits so much of herself into so few pages. There isn't anything I didn't like about this. FIL (Arriel/19 Grove St. #3/Arlington, MA 02476)

**HAZARDOUS WASTE Dec. 2002** 8.5x11 37¢ 4pgs.

This issue focuses on music, any good music that means or had meant something to the editor. He talks up vinyl and the attributes of a good mix tape. The newsletter gives most of its space to reviews, but there are a few photos as well. LO (Matt Smith/210 Dewey St. #3/Worcester, MA 01610)

**HERE CIVILIZATION CEASED** 5.5x8.5 \$1 52pgs.

In this 'zine author Shaun writes of traveling by train and bicycle. His travel serves as a catalyst for reminiscing and philosophizing about his life experiences and relationships with people and places. The majority of this 'zine is filled with events and thoughts from a bicycle trek down the California coast. Leaving from San Francisco, Shaun stops many places along the way and is spurred into reveries by various sites or vistas. Much of Shaun's introspection centers around modern American culture and his withdrawal therefrom. Shaun describes places on his journey with considerable attention to all senses and occasionally some thoughts on history too. He takes in whole landscapes which he moves through. The trek ends abruptly and Shaun seeks the ocean to heal. In the first section of this 'zine Shaun catches a train and considers how rail travel changed the course of civilization. In the third section he writes of the development of Orange County, CA, the danger fueled lifestyle he experienced there, and what stays with him. Strong descriptive writing and some bright graphics make *Here Civilization Ceased* a 'zine worth seeking out. SJS (Shaun/PO Box 1282/Fullerton, CA 92836)

**I HATE THIS PART OF TEXAS #4** 5.5x8.5 \$2 28pgs.

This 'zine begins with an essay on the editor's reasons for writing stories and how his stories fit with the big story that is life on our planet. The stories that follow tell of life in New Orleans and how the city's ambience and history play a role in the lives of its people. The stories tell of a job delivering food by bicycle, bike mishaps, and working at a DIY community bicycle repair shop. A friend contributes an essay on her experiences living in New Orleans. Also there are several short pieces that look mainly at the pleasures and pains of language and communication. While writing these stories, the editor pays close attention to his place in our culture and how his words effect other people. SJS (PO Box 72581/New Orleans, LA 70172)

**I'M JOHNNY AND I DON'T GIVE A FUCK #5**

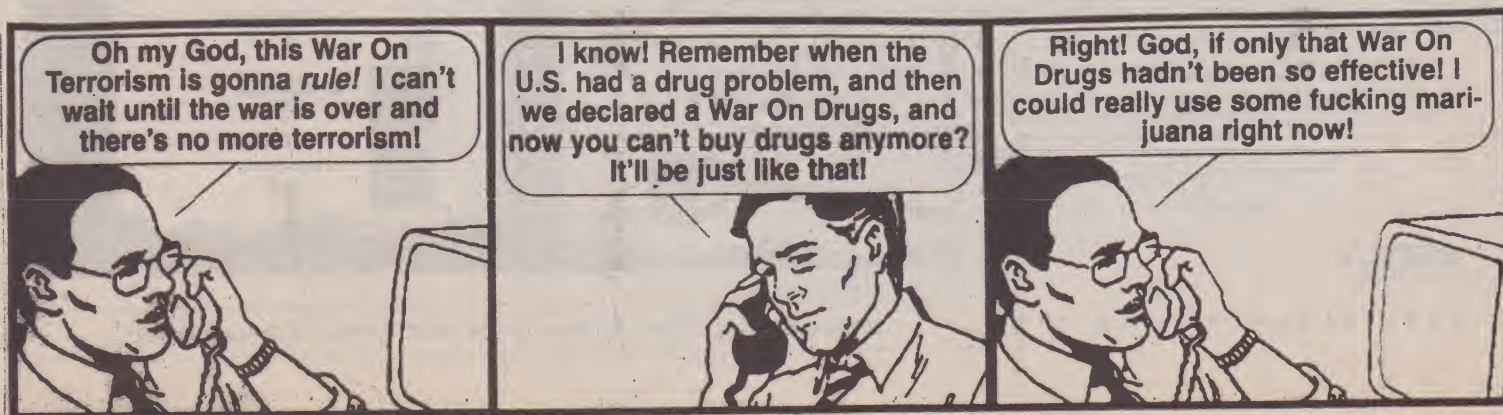
4.25x5.5 \$4 94pgs.  
Andy, not Johnny, is a lovely storyteller. The items he focuses on and their accompanying descriptions are vivid and fun. The humanistic quality in his stories gives the reader something to hold onto. The ups and downs, ins and outs, highs and lows of a shabby old house gets told through the stories of its many tenants. Names of characters fly by, just as the nine years of living in this punk house, but not without a good anecdote for each of them. Issue #5 is the story of life over a long period of time and end, quite fittingly, with the bridge into a new era. A new baby eventually comes and they get evicted! Times change, but memories in this 'zine tell the story. Really good stuff. LO (Andy/PO Box 21533/1850 Commercial Dr./Vancouver, BC/V5N 5T5/Canada)

**KISS OFF #8** 5.5x8.5 \$2/trade 38pgs.

*Kiss Off* is a personal 'zine with stories and observations from the life of the editor. The subject matter ranges from bar fights, crushes, traveling to New York, work, and some other stuff. This is a mellow 'zine, and the writing really made me think about being in someone else's shoes for a while. It also made me want to ride my bike more. CD (Chris/7-306 Frank St./Ottawa, ON/K2P 0X8/Canada)

**LET'S FLEX THE STUPID MUSCLE #1**

5.5x8.5 free 12pgs.  
If the sole purpose was to be annoying and inane, it did a damn good job. The name says it all. CD (4507 N Gantenbein/Portland, OR 97217)





**LARCENY #15** 3x5.5 \$1/trade 20pgs.

In this small issue editor Shaun writes about high school experiences and people he knew then, the things he learns from the people with whom he works, and distributing 'zines among people who seem unaware of what a 'zine is. Shaun's introspective writings examine his relationships with friends and acquaintances. SJS (Shaun/8128 Constitution #8/Sterling Heights, MI 48313)

**LARCENY #16** 5.5x8.5 \$1 44pgs.

A personal 'zine with a nice and clean cut-in-past layout and a simple—I'd almost say "minimalist"—aesthetic. The author seems oriented within the hardcore scene—with straightedge and emo tendencies—but there's a lot of variety in the content here. Everything from black metal to relationships to record reviews. It seems quite well done, and sincere in its intention. Worth checking out. TS (Shaun Allen/8128 Constitution #8/Sterling Heights, MI 48313)

**LETHAL BUBBLEGUM #1** 4.25x5.5 \$1.50 16pgs.

Star's stories of a damaged and damaging family life are told brutally here. She uses simple words and stick figure drawings to give you the basics. All of the miserable and sad gray area you can fill in on your own. In the simplest of terms, it speaks to the human experience and tells a very real story. This is a very brave project. LO (SSR/PO Box 14332/Portland, OR 97293)

**LEAPFROG #7** 5.5x8.5 donation 32pgs.

Leapfrog continues covering the intersection of bike culture and punk culture. Features in this issue include an interview with a custom bicycle frame builder named Matt Chester. He discusses the technical side of bicycle design and construction, the state of bike culture today, and his philosophy of bicycling. There is another interview with bike punk band Rambo in which they discuss their music and bicycle based message. Other articles discuss Critical Mass tactics in Chicago and Portland, long distance bike rides, and taking the bus to work. Leapfrog begins with columns about various aspects of bicycling. This issue looks at slow traffic versus fast traffic, trade show antics, community, and motion over stagnation. Leapfrog is an important contributor to constructing a self-sufficient community and fun to read as well. SJS (Scott Spitz/6163 Carrollton Ave./Indianapolis, IN 46220)

**THE LITTLE BLACK STAR #22** 5.5x8.5 37¢ 4pgs.

This little agitator is back for another round. Issue #22 discusses US relations with Arab countries, reviews Bush's first year in office, and the dark side of coffee. As always, it has a good amount of info in a neat little package. LO (AAC/PO Box 197/Lewisburg, PA 17837)

**MEDIA READER #6** news \$1 32pgs.

Even though I personally find *Media Reader* a bit removed and academic in its tone, I know a lot of folks like this, and I recognize it to be a very accomplished publication, both aesthetically and content-wise. This 'zine is almost ubiquitous—there's always a copy lying around somewhere or another—and I'm sure most of you have seen it around and already have your own opinions. Reviewing the higher profile publications, I usually feel it's my duty to let you know that the new issue is here, and that it contains X, Y, and Z. Thus, in this issue one might find: AIDS activism in Botswana, violence and media, an interview with Mimi Nguyen, reports from Chiapas and Genova, and, of course, record reviews. Incidentally, even if I did buy the whole liberal left's notion that all we need are better leaders (and the inherent faith in the systems of Capitalism and Democracy thus implied), I still wouldn't believe George Bush is anything other than a figurehead. Sure he's "stupid," and provide the occasional laugh, but I'd be keeping my eye on Cheney, Ashcroft, Rumsfeld, Rice, and all the other lower-profile actors that are the true arbiters of Power. TS (Stickfigure Distro/PO Box 55462/Atlanta, GA 30308)

**NERO FIDLED WHILE ROME BURNED**

7x8.5 \$7 12pgs.

The titles of this 'zine alludes to the distrust and concern the editor has for our current US presidential administration. This issue concerns itself entirely with the sketchy, illegal, colluding, and irresponsible ideas/relationships Bush and Cheney have and have had. Though it is written in an unsophisticated manner that tends to call names and rant on and on, this article does give a lot of troubling information. Good conspiracy theory generally has more citations, but this opinion piece gets the job done. LO (PO Box 721/Homewood, IL 60430)

**NEUFUTUR #8** 5.5x8.5 \$1/trade 24pgs.

In this issue of *Neufutur* editor James exposes some of what makes him tick, taking his experiences and finding connections between fears and joys, places, friends, and the changes in his personality and beliefs. James seems a busy student with a full life, some angst for his future, and an ability to share his thoughts. There are also some 'zine profiles from younger (under 16) 'zine makers and lots of reviews of previous *Neufutur* issues. SJS (James Mcquiston/UB Box 6064/408 S. Locust Street/Greencastle, IN 46135)

**THE NEW SCHEME #7** 8.5x11 free 68pgs.

*The New Scheme* returns for another round of music, ideas, and communication. This issue features interviews with the bands Dillinger 4, Hiresukan, Shadows Fall, Lattimer, Matt Pond PA, and one on the semi-demise of DeSoto Records. Familiar content like music reviews, fanzine and book reviews, and plenty of ads can be found. Their columnists bring up political topics as well as columns espousing the writers' personal beliefs. It is a nice read. LO (PO Box 19873/Boulder, CO 80308)

**NINA REBELIOSA #2** 5.5x8.5 trade 24pgs.

Dedicated to the idea of what gives her pleasure in a messed up world, this issue talks about making changes for that goal. She delves into her own personality and experiences while discussing coming to terms with her sexuality, the benefits of negative expression within punk spaces in terms of healing depression, and trusting in herself in the hitch hiking travel story. Nina also talks to the outside world in terms of abortion rights and education. I liked the mix of themes she brings into this issue. It has a lot of personality and a fun edge. Heck, she even gives directions for making your own leg warmers, including a pattern! LO (Rhee/PO Box 444/Wollongong, NSW 2520/Australia)

**NO ONE TOUCHES THE DREAM TEAM#8**

5.5x8.5 \$1 28pgs.

Sarcasm oozes out of every pore of this read. *No One Touches The Dream Team* returns for the eighth installment of this pain in the ass rag. This time around they tell you all about the mono-ped future of humanity, the terror of government trained attack squirrels, why blind people should well goggle eyed glasses, as well as reviewing people and diseases. They do their best to add a 2K3 spin to the tried and true dick and fart joke at every turn. LO (PO Box 19561/Boulder, CO 80308)

**THE NORTHEASTERN ANARCHIST #5**

8.5x11 \$4 48pgs.

This here publication has become somewhat of a staple in my diet of reading materials and news items. The NA keeps getting better and I think has the potential to become somewhat of a flag bearer in the national anarchist movement. The opinion pieces, while sometimes opinionated, are getting much better, not that they were bad in the first place. This issue has a union (and debate of unions in revolutionary organizing) topic base. I found the debate of unions and other devices interesting because I am currently working with the living wage coalition in my town and are in the process of organizing a temporary workers union. Its good to know that there are other anarchists trying out other ways of organizing among the working class. These people put theory into practice and their analysis and opinion are readily available. I always enjoy (as I have stated before) the history section; this one is a highlight on the Bolshevik revolution. Get organized and get conscience and start the revolution from the working class up. CF (PO Box 230685/Boston, MA 02123)

**THE OBJECTOR Summer 2002** 8.5x11 \$2 16pgs.

This is the flagship journal for the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors, based dually out of Philadelphia and my own Oakland. Upon first glance, I really expected to trash this publication, as I have some critical differences with the peace movement's apparent conception of war only as the spectacular skirmishes prosecuted with soldiers and munitions, rather than the on-going political, economic, and covert actions of our nation since its inception to obtain and maintain resources, power, and ultimately, world hegemony—all in mine and your names. Equally problematic is their apparent analytical limitation of war as something our military conducts upon other peoples, rather than the reality of the class war which is precipitated daily on most of us here by the ruling class and its tool of legitimacy, the state; a war we are all players in, directly or indirectly working for the advancement of one side or the other. However, once I sat down and began to investigate the content of the journal, I found a level of humanity here usually missing from the vast majority of leftist and liberal publications; this is mostly delivered in the form of a few personal stories of people who have done time in service of one military or another. The rest of the content, even taking my above critique into consideration, is still very timely and relevant, and thus I have to admit that this is a worthwhile expenditure of the twenty minutes it would take me to read the *Objector*. TS (CCCC/630 20<sup>th</sup> St. #302/Oakland, CA 94612)

**OPERATION FREE FOOD** 5.5x8.5 \$1 36pgs.

This is a short DIY posi-'zine by the kids that do *Punks Before Profits*. Apparently they are doing one off issues now to avoid deadlines. I have to admit that I was hooked in by the title, but then came to find that it really wasn't so much about free food at all. There's an interview with Hit Me Back (from Los Angeles), a tour journal, and a survey style interview with 6 random kids from different places about their local DIY scenes and how they are involved in them. FIL (Ryan/99 Custer St./Buffalo, NY 14214)

**PICK YOUR POISON #3** 5.5x8.5 \$2 64pgs.

This was an amusing read. The author picked a bunch of random words from the dictionary, and then wrote a story for each one. Though similar to a shitty junior high or high school writing assignment, it made for some interesting stories that the author says would have been forgotten had it not been for the memories sparked by the word. Some funny, some sad, and some sort of there. Most of the stories have a growing up, or coming of age feel to them, with subject matter including, school, drugs, drinking, music, mischief and lots more. CD (Nate Gangelhoff/PO Box 8995/Minneapolis, MN 55408)

**PROFANE EXISTENCE #40** free news 20pgs.

*Profane Existence* is back (again)! Once again trying to keep this crust punk and highly political project alive, the *Profane Existence* punks print this resource 'zine for everyone. Just as previous issues, they include information on local Twin Cities politics and resources, worldwide political discussion, ecological activist news, columns from various scenesters, and a serious support for the DIY anarcho-punk scene. This time around they interview Scored, La Mantra De Fiqiria, and Bleeding Kansas. It is free if you can find it, but send them some money for postage and they'll really appreciate it. LO (PO Box 8722/Minneapolis, MN 55408)

**PICARESQUE #3** 5.5x8.5 free 40pgs.

This issue of *Picaresque* has two parts. The first is a collection of poetry by Mary Hedayati which is filled with concrete and sexual imagery and psychological and pop culture references. The story like structure of the poems provides a fast-paced, occasionally turbulent flow for the reader. The second part is comprised of anecdotes and memories from the life of editor, Brendan Rocks. He begins with a bunch of stories from schooldays past and the exploits and events of various friends and acquaintances. That series seems to climax with a truly hilarious recounting of a conversation about time travel. From there Brendan tells of friends and family throughout Australia and closes the 'zine with tales from his travels about the British Commonwealth. Brendan knows how to tell a story that is fun to read, funny in a dry witty way, and often drop a subtle life lesson along the way. Find yourself a copy of *Picaresque* and make yourself happy. SJS (Brendan Rocks/3 Sharpley Avenue/Stawell/Victoria 3380/Australia)

**THE POLITICS OF MUSA SAPIENTUM**

4x5.5 \$2 60pgs.

*Musa Sapientum* is the Linnean name for one species of banana. The intention of this 'zine is to shape the international politics of the banana. Within its pages you find an extended analysis of how the banana became the fifth largest agricultural crop on our planet. The transnational corporations that dominate banana production and transport are examined in detail as is the history of US domination of Central American countries where much of the banana crop is centered. Banana farming and processing practices are investigated and the damage to the ecology and health of plantation workers is exposed. Finally the investigation turns to the exploitation of women on the plantations and in their affiliated processing plants. All in all this publication tells a sordid tale of destruction of indigenous cultures and tropical rainforest, industrial chemical dependent monocropping, and corporate profits over life on our planet. No solutions are offered to counter these problems though and on the last page it is stated that similar results would be found by investigating the politics of many other crops. SJS (hatscat@hotmail.com)

**PUNISH OR BE DAMNED #1** 5.5x8.5 \$1.00 18pgs.

The editor spent some time studying US history over summer break. Contained in these 18 pages are his thoughts and observations on what he's learned. This could have been a dry read but, he used personal experiences as examples. He does a great job of showing the connections of all the ills of today's world with the past, going from things like racism, slavery (including today's employer/employee exploitation), power and on. MA (2 Tinkham Glenn/Wilbraham, MA 01095)

**REASON TO BELIEVE #7** 8.5x11 \$1 80pgs.

Content-wise, RTB seems to fall somewhere in between *HaC* and *Clamor*, while the style falls squarely in the camp of *HaC* and *MRR*. Well, actually the content is probably a few degrees more radical than that of *Clamor*. The quality of the content is definitely on par with the aforementioned scene staples, and hailing from the UK, it would seem RTB is probably a staple in the European scenes. Covered in this issue: Prisoner issues, Crispus Attucks, Haven Distribution, Rod Coronado, a discussion about small 'zines and large 'zines, Free Papua Movement, a Macedonian scene report, and all the requisite letters, news, and reviews one would expect by a 'zine this serious. For me personally, much of the political content has more of an activist feel than a punk or anarchist feel, but I would still highly recommend *Reason to Believe* for those who realize there's more to DIY and hardcore than the North American continent. TS (145-149 Cardigan Rd/Leeds/LS6 1LJ/UK)

**RECLUSE 'ZINE #7** 5.5x8.5 \$1.25 32pgs.

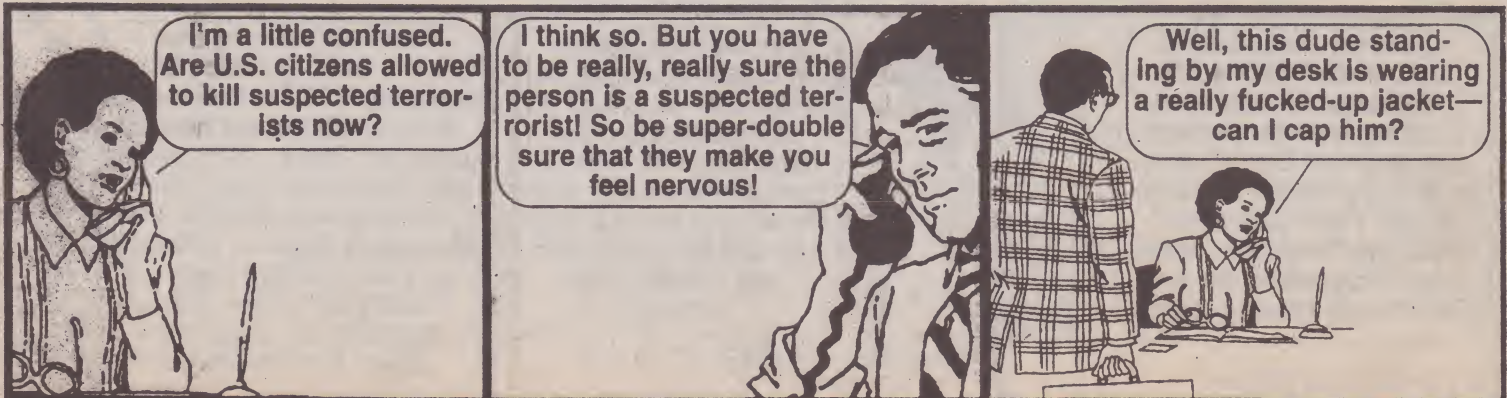
*Recluse 'Zine* has been around for a while, and the editor has even begun a 'zine distro and press call Kneucklehead. One of the reasons for starting the project was to be able to release varied styles of media without trying to fit all the different projects into the *Recluse* box. I find this odd only because this issue seems so disjointed. There are numerous columnists and contributions, most of them very different than the last. Most of the editor's voice comes through in the interview with him about the press and distro. I suppose part of the focus is meant to be on the local Columbus scene, and what people from his are would like to contribute. To me, it just seems more fitting (for a 'zine of this style) to have more original content from the editor and to be more focused on a particular idea. I can remember past issues of *Recluse* having that quality and I hope it returns for the next. LO (PO Box 307663/Columbus, OH 43230)

**ROOTS OF COMPASSION #1** 5.5x8.5 \$2 44pgs.

This 'zine was compiled from submissions to the *Roots Of Compassion* website. The folks responsible intend to promote a cruelty free lifestyle. Its contents include much information about veganism and animal rights. There is an intriguing article about the lives of domestic animals that considers pets as possessions or playthings altered to please their owners. Also you will find a considerable amount of Marxist critique and philosophy and some vegan recipes for tasty pizzas and deserts. There are interviews with Good Clean Fun, The International Noise Conspiracy, and Strike Anywhere in which they talk about food, capitalism, touring, and the usual band stuff. SJS (Marc Pierschel/Warendorferstr. 148/48145 Muenster/Germany)

**STRAIGHT SOB #4** 5.5x8.5 \$2 36pgs.

This one combines opinion pieces covering the spectrum of the editor's interests. Crust and hardcore music, environmentalist politics, anarchist hopes, and animal rights are all addressed here. *Straight Sob* is a straight forward read that can be dry at times. Band photos can be found on most pages. LO (Mike Schake/63 Highland Rd./Hackettstown, NJ 07840)





**SKAM #7** 5.5x8.5 \$3 60pgs.

I really enjoyed this one. Funny stories about high school, college, vacations with parents, and other random stuff. Oh yeah, and drugs. Mushrooms and jazz fests, morninglory seeds and circuses, pot and jamaica, and other fun stuff. Come on you militant straight edger, you know you want to live vicariously through *Skam!* But really, the stories are interesting, and the writing is sincere and honest. CD (New Mouth From Dirty South/PO Box 19742/New Orleans, LA 70179-0742)

**SLAVE #7** 8.5x11 \$4 106pgs.

Another satisfying issue of *Slave*... I am once again impressed by the scope of ideas they cover, how well they do it, and how damn good this 'zine looks. The interviews in this issue are with Converse, Michelle Tea, Botch, Chris Duncan, Lightning Bolt, and Engine Down. Each of them is done as a private conversation, which gives the interviewee(s) the space to react on a more interesting level. Along with those fine features, they print original fiction, columns, and a piece on punk fashion. This one comes very highly recommended. LO (PO Box 10093/Greensboro, NC 27404)

**SLUG & LETTUCE #73** news 60¢ 20pgs.

Like the changing of seasons or the rising and setting of the sun, the new issue of *Slug & Lettuce* has arrived, at this point more akin to a natural phenomenon than the work of one woman. Anyone who has more than a year or two of punk under their belt would have a hard time not encountering a copy of *Christ(tine)*'s long-running and ubiquitous publication, which I'm sure by now has more than earned the title of "venerable." Contents include the usual editorial, columns, classifieds, ads, and the requisite book, "zine, and music reviews. Also in this issue is Fly's "Zero Content" comic. Simple, but as always there's a high level of quality and a lot of character contained in so few pages. As always, recommended. TS (PO Box 26632/Richmond, VA 23261-6632)

**SWING SET GIRL #3** 4.25x5.5 \$1/trade 28pgs.

This self-proclaimed "per-zine about growing up, falling in love, finding dreams, death, gender, etc." falls short on a few counts. Granted, her opinions throughout some articles (like "pornography politics") are clearly defined but the majority of the 'zine is filled with a hodgepodge of short entries that lack clarity and cohesiveness. Also includes a pullout booklet on female genitalia mutilation with a decent list of networking resources. Unfortunately, the photographs are virtually indistinguishable in this cut-and-paste format. So, if you enjoy perusing the love and sorrow of a stranger's relationships in a mediocre layout, this 'zine is for you. Otherwise, pass on by. BL (Sarah/PO Box 5754/Parippany, NJ 07054)

**SWITCHBLADE MAGAZINE #2** 8.5x11 \$2 32pgs.

This 'zine is still in the rough initial stages, but it pulls out a couple things worth reading this time around. Interviews with Most Precious Blood, Panic, Black Widows, Burning Angel.net, and Sworn Enemy are the features this time around. They also print columns, music reviews, a play excerpt, some of the poetry of Jason Tsittinas, and a Dag Nasty write-up. LO (240 Willowood Dr./Wantagh, NY 11793-1224)

**THESE ARE THE DAYS #5** 4.25x5.5 \$1.50 68pgs.

Hmm... The whole time I was reading this I felt like I was making small talk with a stranger. Some people like that sort of thing. All I wonder during the exchange is what's the point. This 'zine is a collection of thoughts from the editor with some artwork here and there. Words on gardening, moving, and preparing to get married. I didn't find this engaging, or entirely interesting. MA (PO Box 788/Chapel Hill, NC 27514)

**TIMOTHY'S MONSTER #2** 4.25x5.5 \$1 64pgs.

A small personal 'zine detailing the author's travels from the Pacific Northwest to Europe and back. Mostly just text with a few small images; a couple appear to have been drawn by a certain Giovanni of *Cryptic Slaughter* infamy, who also seems to be a participant in the adventure. Not of particular interest to me personally, but if the re-telling of the wacky exploits and foibles of a small group of young Americans in Europe sounds appealing to you, this might your fix. TS (Ryan Bareither/5827 N Morton/Spokane, WA 99207)

**TRIC #15** 8.5x11 \$? 48pgs.

You get the average music magazine faire here. Lots of well done reviews, a couple interviews, some columns, and a good amount of ads. The DJ top tens and reviews of electronic singles was an interesting component of this issue. I didn't really know what it was they were talking about, but much better than reading the same old thing by far. *Tric* throws in some humor with a section on eye patches and a few comics. I'm not really sure which scene *Tric* is speaking to (aside from the multifaceted local scene) so it was hard to get my bearings. It could use more content, but who couldn't? LO (Casey Grabowski/219 E Court/Wilmington, DE 19810)

**UNAFFILIATED #3** 8.5x11 free 32pgs.

There are a couple gems in this issue. First off, the article on the creation of tension between the US and Afghanistan includes well-cited facts and some interesting hypotheses. Second, the piece on women's health pertaining to birth control, infections, and herbal abortions explained this multi-faceted issue well. Third, the downright hilarious comics that place discussions of US foreign policy in what appear to be worker's handbooks made me chuckle pretty good. Other sections of the 'zine deal with women's body issues, non-monogamous relationships, media megabusiness and alternative solutions, and there are a few records reviews tossed in at the end. LO (PO Box 368/Lyons, CO 80540)

**VOICES WAKE US #4** 5.5x8.5 \$1 40pgs.

*Voices Wake Us* fills its pages with intelligent music banter and definitive top tens. The first section has excerpts from e-mail conversations about the best/most influential bands of hardcore and (black) metal genres, along with smart deconstruction of the records meant to whom. Then it moves into the interviews. The first is with Tragedy, in which they discuss the band's overall message as to the state of the world. The second is with black metal's Ildjarn. It deals with black metal's influences, roots, issues, and why this guy hates everyone. Both interviews shed interesting light on the ones they talk to. The 'zine closes with well written record reviews, which is what you would expect after so much heady punk discussion in the beginning. I thoroughly enjoyed reading what Ben printed here. LO (Ben Parker/5290 Larner Hall/New York, NY 10027)

**WE NEVER SLEEP** 5.5x8.5 \$2 32pgs.

Packed with short articles, *We Never Sleep* gives you up to date information about political prisoners' legal struggles. There are pages upon pages of informative pieces, often with contact information for the group assisting in the fight for justice. I found this 'zine pretty interesting, but it seems the most appropriate for those looking to get directly involved in actions or legal campaigns. LO (APLAN/818 SW 3rd Ave. PMB 354/Portland, OR 97204)

**WHAT LOVES MEANS TO YOU** 5.5x8.5 free 8pgs.

This short 'zine discusses love and nature. The editor asks questions and delves deep into what motivates us and what gives us joy. It urges you to communicate these positive forces in your own life. LO (Mike Houseman/4768 Flying Eagle Dr./Kentwood, MI 49548)

**NINA REBELIOSA #3/15TH MAY 1905 #4**

5.5x8.5 trade 12pgs.

I enjoyed the last issue of *Nina Rebeliosa* that I read, so I expected some of the same engaging personal content here. Though page miscalculation made for some last minute filler, most of this is a brutally honest personal story. Rinee discusses a suicide attempt, turbulence and getting mentally settled in her life, and the search for happiness. It is written as one long article, so you get a very good sense of her when you read it. *15th May 1905* also takes a personal approach to 'zine content, but breaks up the pieces into different ideas. It comes off as a "catalogue of thoughts" as she put it as it travels through diary-like entries on her thoughts, other people's ideas that affect her, and images that strike her. These two 'zines work well together. LO (Bek/PO Box 444/Wollongong, NSW 2520/Australia)

**REMAINS OF A CAVEMAN #2/SMALL SAILOR**

#10 5.5x8.5 \$1.50/trade 52pgs.

Sort of an interesting split affair from the UK. ROAC has more of per-zine feeling with travel diaries, shorter personal musings, and lots of hand-drawn images. There's a really interesting short interview with M. Bukowski (artist of Rambo's LP cover & booklet, and many other records and 'zines) about art. Another similar interview with one of those folks that does all that goofy Sam McPheeters-inspired art on the Reversal of Man and Combat Wounded Veteran records; unfortunately the interviewee comes off as quite pompous, making for an annoying read. All in all, a nice enthusiastic 'zine. The other half, *Small Sailor*, didn't appeal to me as much. It had less of the nice personal qualities in its content, and comes off generally a little "punkier" than I can tolerate. Record and 'zine reviews, interviews with record labels Intimidation and Household name, and some other miscellaneous content. TS (18 Brangwyn Dr./Patcham/Brighton/East Sussex/BN1 8XD/UK)

**LOOK, BOOKS. WEE!****EVERYONE IN SILICO** 5.5x8.5 \$13.95 242pgs.

Jim Munroe, the former managing editor for *Adbusters*, returns with what is apparently his third novel. I haven't read either of his other two books, but this would appear to be his first foray into cyberpunk, a movement within science fiction first pioneered in the 1980s by such notables as William Gibson and Bruce Sterling. Basically, cyberpunk is science fiction set in a near-future world with technology extrapolated from what is currently possible in such a way that while it remains familiar, it takes on certain fantastic qualities—for better or for worse. Many of cyberpunk's protagonists would be immediately familiar to most readers of *Heartattack*, as they are often punks, geeks, hackers, terrorists, guerrillas, or other archetypes of the underground; similarly, many of the plots of this genre also revolve around familiar tropes: evil corporations, digital resistance, secret government conspiracies, and the triumph of cultural rebels against the massive forces of power—victories often hinged on the ability of the protagonists to appropriate and divert the means and materials of mass culture.

That said, good cyberpunk (like any good literature) can often successfully convey a progressive message while it entertains—this seems more digestible when one treats the message as part of the story that embellishes the plot. Unfortunately when one decides to embellish a message with a plot, the results are often unpleasant. Such is the case with *Everyone In Silico*: here the author has begun with the "corporations are bad" anti-globalist ideology and adorned it with a half-hearted story of free love, aging hipsters, genetically-engineered pets, body modifications, white collar office job culture, and lesbian lovers. It always creeps me out when men write lesbian characters.

Something in the tone of this book leads me to believe the author has sacrificed the kind of complexity required to create a readable novel in order to make sure the message is "understood by the masses." One scenario has a protagonist check several different Starbucks within a single block to find one secluded enough. Whereas good cyberpunk shows the

ills of modern techno-culture run amok through character interaction and other more subtle means, this book smacks you over the head with it. This kind of lack of faith in the reader makes for an excruciatingly didactic book. If this sounds like your thing, check it out; however, if you're looking for good science fiction with revolutionary themes, I'd recommend checking out Ursula LeGuin or Kim Stanley Robinson instead. TS (Four Walls Eight Windows/39 W 14th St. Rm. 503/New York, NY 10011)

**YOURS FOR THE REVOLUTION** 5.5x8.5 \$? 204pgs.

In an eerily familiar future, the story begins. There has been a great recession, world politics have only gotten worse, and American society is headed downward. We are introduced to our protagonist, Penelope, a young girl with ideas for a better world. Her mixed-up family life (caused partially from the collapse of the economy) causes her to search for like-minded people to connect with. Along the way she meets an intellectual nerd named Eugene and his tough as nails punk sister. Penelope's relationships with those folks cause her to take new paths, jump from the norm, and start traveling. In doing so she encounters both heartache and epiphany. When another strong female friend comes into her life, the danger increases. Soon the idealist is acting out for the sake of the ideal world she used to only contemplate. She also learns about relationships with people, especially those closest to her. Penelope's story gets told with many revelations about the world and her place in it. For the sake of not ruining the book for you, I won't tell any more.

What I liked about this book was the many ideas the author attempted to tackle. With the understanding that many revolutionary ideas are interconnected but not often explained, the candid nature of the events works to make it all click. The characters are familiar and you can easily buy their motivations and hopes. (You'll recognize traits of people you know in most of her characters.) What I disliked here were the obvious ways some of the grand themes and morals were delivered. This story would read better if it showed you why certain ideas get held up as right and wrong by the characters—not just explained in bland terms. Plus, sometimes the characters are just too one dimensional (even though many seem to be based off real life punks). The basic statements and cheesy lines end up taking away from the sophistication that would make this a great novella.

The author of this book, Carissa, used to do a 'zine called *Screams From The Inside*, so some of you might be familiar with her writing style. Though *Yours For The Revolution* is a work of fiction, there are many similarities to past projects. Even with the subtle downsides, I am glad she wrote this. It is much better than many DIY novels floating around the punk community—especially the post-apocalyptic ones (which is almost all of them). LO (Bloodlink Books/4434 Ludlow St./Philadelphia, PA 19104)

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art from *Unaffiliated*



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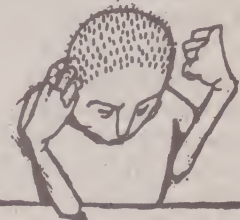
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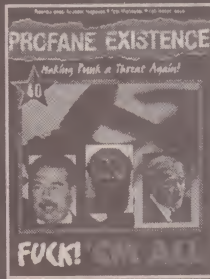
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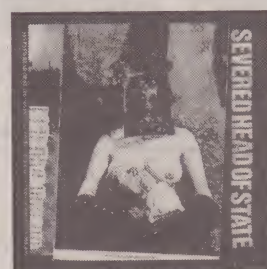
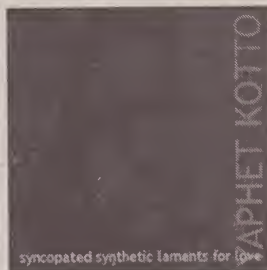
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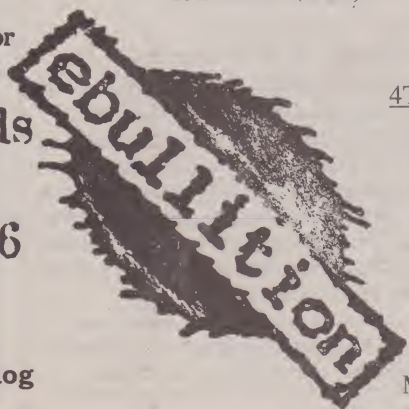
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